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THE MUSE,

AS I HAVE FOUND HER;

INCLUDING SUNDRY OCCASIONAL POEMS,

AND A TALE ENTITLED

THE REBEL:

BY HIMSELF.

Here's poetry for fame—
For Happiness my love,
My Honor for my name;
For *all*, my God above.

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STOLEN HOURS.

A few poems which the author trusts will be found original; and chiefly from the mere fact that to attribute them even in part to another, would be even less flattering to that other than to himself.

PREFACE.

In exposing the following *hatching out*, as it were, of my brood to the tender claws of critics—for the most part self-appointed—and to the scarcely less tender mercies of the public, I would preface this Preface by confessing that it has cost me probably as much uneasiness as the larger portion of my poetical labors. To say the truth, it is embarrassing; even like to the blushing introduction which the romantic youth must first undergo ere he may woo and win the maid that has struck his eager fancy. The idol of his heart is fair and proud, exacting, capricious, and playfully malicious, jealous of what she thinks is due her, and suspicious as to the just claims of the aspirant to her favors; the wooer, on the other hand, though equally proud, is timid, unused to the delicate situation, and fearful lest he should be judged aspiring beyond measure, or presumptuous without reason. Sanguine, yet holding back, the youth is brought forward, cuts an awkward courtesy, mumbles some incoherent gallantry, and;—reader, the ceremony is performed, and we are acquaintances, soon I trust, to become friends. If you are fair, then forgiving the liberty I would take, let me kneel lowly to your knee and whisper to your heart,—which more than once, and deeply, I hope, will be awakened in divided sympathy to the offered incense of some future page.

There have been many occasions when I have been tempted to stifle the tugging voice within my breast, and throw these productions to the flames, or preserve them for the sole warming of my heart's hearth, a resolution which—in whatever light the disclosure may appear—has been warmly and gratuitously commended by the most of my considerate friends.

However keenly the latter may be disappointed in the present departure from what may have been a wise resolve on my part, and a wiser counsel on theirs, I scarce feel it incumbent on me to make any apology to them for this intrusion on the world. In justice, however, to the obligations of friendship as properly understood and practiced, at least with regard to

me, I will state, that on one occasion, and while laboring under a not unusual depression of spirits, I communicated to a friend how uneasy I was lest a failure to succeed in the task I had undertaken, might bring about in the minds of the community the not at all gratifying impression that I was either immoderately vain, or to repeat my own words "a d—m fool." He reassured me;—and pointing out the innumerable failures and disgraces of better and far superior men, reminded me of the fact that "did the worse indeed come to the worst, at least could I feel a solace in the reflection that I would be in d—m good company." The die was cast, and the result has been the effusions now submitted.

A strong believer in the maxim that—whatever may be a man's natural gifts—that which is *worth* winning is ever difficult to win, and that which is easiest acquired offers but little inducement save that for its acquisition, I have not stopped at the numerous obstacles in my path, but have persevered, I trust with some reasonable chances of reward. And before dropping this subject, it may not be out of place to state that what at first appeared insurmountable obstacles has subsequently loomed up on nearer acquaintance as clouds instead of mountains, and indeed even more ephemeral than lasting or real. Of course, my achievements—whatever be their merit or demerit—have caused me much annoyance, much fretting, and considerable uneasiness, and yet, now that my labors are temporarily passive, I must confess to a feeling like that of the schoolboy, when, his night's task being completed, he lies down to rest in the enjoyment of content borrowed from the conscious discharge of his day's duties, satisfied with that, at least, whatever the morrow may hold in store.

I have consulted no "authority" as to whether I should submit my productions to public favor or disfavor, as the case may prove. I prefer to deal directly with my jury. The public is certainly the best judge, if not always infallible, and the verdict it shall render will be less humiliating to me if unfavorable, than one rendered by an authority certainly more assailable, and in most cases more prejudiced. My bark is launched; if it must sink, let it be on the *broad* ocean, not in the more silent and secluded inland stream.

It is said that Mahomet at the age of forty, and after having been married twelve years, had succeeded in making but one convert to his belief, and that—his wife. Subsequently, and during the four first years spent by him in propagating his faith, his efforts were so far blessed as to enable him to count four of his menials as his disciples.

It can readily be seen how much encouragement such a contemplation must afford me, although I must confess that I am as yet beyond sight of the promised land—Matrimony, and still chewing the manna of the desert —Celibacy. But more particularly do I feel some solace in the reflection that *I* at least, have already, at this early stage of my profession, made a few converts. Whether I am likely to increase my following or rather lose that, however small, which I now can boast of, is in a great measure a question of temperament, not taste, (fortunately), though I fear that in the present instance, not being quite so false a prophet as my illustrious predecessor, I may suffer in consequence, and especially in the estimation of my already distinguished cotemporary penny-a-liners, many of whom have ere this succeeded beyond their own expectations in reaching the seventh heaven of poetical maze, as even less graphically and cloudily described by Mahomet himself. From these, my cotemporaries, I claim, and indeed expect but little sympathy, my own admiration of them being for the most part confined, with few exceptions, to their plagiarisms, which—I will do them justice to say—are not as extensive as they might have been, had their authors but stooped to consult a more enlightened taste by being less original.

However;—this is not the place to indulge in comments, particularly of an ill-nature, upon the writing of those who like myself have wooed the Muse, however little in sympathy she may have proven; and even were it otherwise, perhaps am I not sufficiently competent to discriminate;—not to add that a more severe and extended criticism might be ill-timed on an occasion when I myself may scarce afford even an accurate judgment passed upon my own claims to excellence. To say that I exhibit many faults were a flat accusation. *That* is palpable;—and yet may I flatter myself that what I have written is the simple and unaffected prompting

of the heart, and free, if not altogether from the platitudes, at least from the *pompous* emptiness so common to most of our bards of to-day.

It can scarce be expected that one who is, and has ever been as yet entirely dependent upon the labors of his quill, true—but a far ignobler one than the present, should impart that ecstasy by his conceptions of the beautiful, which still belongs to an era of the past, and yet had I rather suffer by a comparison with the honored, pure and true sages of a more classic age (a fate which I must sincerely say would be almost inevitable), than obtain favor in any eyes merely because I had succeeded in touching a sensitive chord, that of flattery, perhaps, or conformed to a so called progressive taste, which as it distorts legitimate art, forgets that the spring of all true eloquence, is Nature. That parent, that mother, I cannot conceive otherwise than simple, ay imperfect; yet perfect in that very imperfectness. If I have been unfaithful to her, departed from truth, justice, generosity—for they are all her's—then, indeed, may I well be brought to task, nay condemned. Even then, however, will the motives yet remain, for it is something to feel that you would do well, could you do so.

In no case, however, should the strictures of censure be applied harshly to the shoulders of one, who, like myself, whilst he claims something in extenuation of his sins, if condemned, asks no reward if judged successful. To say that I am indifferent to the reception which this will receive, would be a contradiction, since had such been the case, I had not thus sought the public approval, and yet am I almost prepared for failure, since under the worst conditions will the public fiat only attack the outer evidences, as it were of my sproutings, arresting, like the early frost, the upward flow of sap, yet leaving the root still warm, intact, and capable of bearing in the future the seed that may still thrive in more congenial soil.

DEDICATION.

To F. Claiborne, *New Orleans, La.*

My Dear Friend:—In dedicating to you this work, which, however poor, is yet to me the dearest object of my labors in any field, I flatter myself that you will not consider it entirely beneath your notice, or even censure. At an earlier period than this, in the golden era of polite literature, my own humble and unaffected strain might have appeared even like to the subdued voice of the cricket chirping to the rising glory of "la divine science,"—its timid accents lost in the fitter music of many a more melodious warbler; and yet, to-day, and now that I have laid the pen aside, I am vain enough to believe that when you will have read a few of my poor and tame effusions, you will perhaps be enabled to recall some olden ballad or favorite line, even as the dull and blundering enthusiast may at times remind you of some melting melody,—and you forgive him, because the strain is dear, the note not unfamiliar. Were such, dear friend, the only mead I were to receive for my irksome labors, I were repaid; could I, on the other hand, receive the assurance from you that you were gratified and flattered at this expression of my friendship, I were more than fitly rewarded.

And yet, do not believe that in offering to you the following work in requital of your own kindness and consideration for its author, I have been prompted entirely by motives as unselfish as disinterested. Indeed, had my labors been such as to have gratified me, and honored him to whom they had been dedicated, perhaps, nay, surely had I consecrated them at some other shrine. As it is, doubtful as I am regarding the success I shall achieve, diffident as I feel as to their merit, I could not conscientiously thus publicly attach another to my bark if it must be wrecked, or jeopardize the dignity of one who can be flattered by this testimonial in but one case—if the author is judged with favor. Hence a

dedication is indeed, in almost every instance an act of great presumption; —where the compliment is as equivocal as it must be in my case, it may be deemed even worse.

In an age and country where publications of the nature of this are so unusual, it is as impossible to anticipate success as it would be rash to say that it is deserved. Poets are rare, philosophers do not even starve, for they do not exist, and the arts, at least in our remote corner, live upon the grudging charity of the few. The penury of talent then can hardly be wondered at, where the community (and unfortunately some reproach may as well be attached to the gentler as to the sterner sex,) on the one hand are wrapped in the engrossing pursuit of accumulation, and on the other hand in the frivolities of fashion and society. True it is, this social condition has always existed, and perhaps in those very countries which above all others have fostered genius and enterprise; and yet it would not be too severe to say, as applicable especially to our section, that whilst many of our later readers would blush to own that they had no acquaintance with the most recent production from the pen of such mountebanks as "Mark Twain," Beecher Stowe, and the like, they would look down with a scornful assumption of superior taste upon an humble worshipper of the authors of a "Traveler," a "Corsair," a "Lady of the Lake," a "Lalla Rookh."

Large and cheap as is the supply of what might be better qualified by another name than our *lighter* literature, it can scarcely be wondered at that the more substantial nourishment for the brain should be crowded from the memory or voted as antiquated and out of time. In fact it is matter of surprise how under the circumstances, the classical lyrists have yet been able to hold their own among any class, for there are still some who—be it affected or real, it boots me not to say—claim some kindred feeling with a past epoch of literary composers; a circumstance which be it well observed, may be ascribed in most instances to a sort of monomania generally on the subject of ancient things, an utter want of adaptability to the progressive pace of the century, and a strange lack of appreciation of the fuss and flurry of railroad and steamboat express rates of speed, an

era, which, as I write, already belongs to yesterday. The morrow holds still greater developments in store, since what a blessing it will be to our highly progressive man to be supplied with a mechanical brain, operating according to the daily routine, and performing that which his natural one finds too slow or laborious, a contrivance which, considering the uses to which it were put, were scarce difficult to imagine, nor would indeed the wear and tear on the patented appliance be such as to necessitate a frequent change or repairs.

—But, carried away by something not unlike the fast spirit of the hour, I am digressing, for it is indeed a long way between a dedication proper, and the point I had reached, although I was merely being led to explain, probably at too great a length, why it is that I shall undergo that failure which I now anticipate.

It may be asked, and pertinently so, why it is, that being impressed with the idea that even did my work possess sufficient merit to have made it successful in other times—an opinion which I must confess admits of much doubt—it cannot be in these, why it is that I have devoted so many hours to a task which shall be fruitless, an undertaking which must be abortive. To this, I can simply reply, that every man is master of his own time, provided he does not use it to the injury of his fellow men, or discreditably to himself.

However futile my exertions may prove, I cannot call the hours that I have devoted thus, lost time. They have caused me to reflect, and to reflect is to learn, though I cannot say that I have as yet found knowledge to be power, especially that knowledge which it is so difficult for me to apply to good use—the knowledge of myself—since, in fact however the following may be received, it is more than likely I shall frequently, and though it be but for the gratification of one alone, indulge the same *weakness*, when the spirit shall move me.

It had been more modest on my part to have ascribed the reason of my anticipated failure to the fact that my labors had been scarcely commensurate with the results achieved, in a word, to the lack of true merit in the work. Perhaps had I done so, had it not been for the fear of being

thought insincere, since, however diffident one may be, it is well known that there still exists enough vanity within the breast of the humblest of us, to cause us to look favorably upon our own efforts when we compare them with those of others, however ineffectual they may appear when viewed by their own light merely. And in fact it would be a poor recommendation to the public for a writer to endorse, and beforehand, their disapprobation of his efforts, since it can scarce be expected to judge favorably of that which the author himself shuns to have attributed him.

It shall be enough for me at any rate, dear friend, that you will not be ashamed of my achievements, and if it may be said in depreciation of me that I aspired too high, far indeed beyond my powers, at least shall I find a solace in having had the courage not to fear defeat, since there is more real nerve in an exposure to disaster, than in the effecting of a truimph which is assured beforehand.

The poems which I have entitled "*Stolen Hours*," were written for the most part in moments which strictly speaking scarce belonged to me; hence the name; moments which snatched from the monotony of what some are pleased to call more serious occupations, I have devoted to a Muse, barren because displeased, ungrateful because not sole mistress of my exertions. Except in a few instances, these productions have but little merit. In many they exhibit but little originality, though it is but just to say that I have not wilfully plagiarized. They may please, but can produce at best only a passing impression. If they live beyond the hour of their first introduction to the reader, or in the memory of one enthusiastic devotee of the Muse, more indiscreet than wise, it is even more than I anticipate, or even have a right to hope for, considering my meagre opportunities.

In conclusion, and whilst I again admit that had I looked forward to success, these labors of my pen had been dedicated to another, allow me to thank you for the encouragement *you*, at least, have ever volunteered in the pursuit of my tastes, an obligation on my side which I cannot consider sufficiently cancelled by the compliment I have endeavoured to pay you. To say the truth, that species of obligation, and probably is it extremely fortunate for me, has not been contracted by many; and if

indeed I must be down in the end, it shall be a balm to my wounded feelings to think that there are few, if any, concerned directly in that fall; and a sort of magnanimous contemplation for my heart, that in defeat I shall at least have succeeded in bringing to light a multitude of prophets, who will scarcely appreciate that, but for the untoward ending of my literary aspirations, they might never have made a wise prediction of their own volition. Before closing, I would add that it will become at once apparent to you that indeed the whole of my effusions would have been the better for a careful and thorough revision. I have been compelled to write hastily and carelessly, and have now less than at any previous time the leisure to mend what is palpably imperfect; and besides it might be a waste of time, labor and patience, to endeavor to improve that which may possess but little intrinsic merit, nor perhaps would the structure have borne any additional adornment, resting as it does upon so frail and precarious a foundation as negligence and inexperience. On the other hand, a lopping off of the more flagrant imperfections and violations of taste might in the language of one of the truest poets

"Like the baseless fabric of a vision,
"Leave not a wreck behind."

With the hope sincerely shared by you, I doubt not, that the following will at least cast no discredit upon either, and ultimately redound to your honor and mine.

I remain, your most affectionate friend,
THE AUTHOR.

NEW ORLEANS, January 18th, 1878.

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STOLEN HOURS.

THE CAT AND THE FOX.

A COLLEGE EXERCISE.

Upon a time, as story tells,
Sir Cat, and Renard, duke of smells,
A fine, cool morn trudged down highway,
Where steam cars swiftly run to-day.
With carpet-bag and tattered clothes,
Yet wary looks and smelling nose,
With now a moan and then a whine,
Each dragging leg and tail behind,
Both seem oppressed by toil and care
And speak in accents of despair.
"What's life," says Cat, "but work and woe,
Where men compassion never show;
And know no pity save to scorn
All such as are inferior born."—
"Alas!" duke Renard adds, "Alas!
Through such sad trials we must pass,
And saintly men as I and thou
Must earn our bread at sweat of brow."
"All is injustice," moans the first,
"Though Heaven knows I never durst
Engage in battle or in strife,
And e'er did lead an upright life,
Detesting fraud and wicked theft,"
(At this he swore by right and left),
"Yet have I each day to complain

Of loss upon my honest gain."
After long silence, Renard speaks,
Whilst flows of tears bedew his cheeks.
"The times are growing worse and worse,
By Jove,—although I hate to curse,—
If I were not a Christian firm,
Methinks I'd quickly end my term,
And bid this wicked world adieu,
Where merit never gets its due;
And friend in vain we moralize,
To see their own faults men want eyes."
And here his sobs so frequent grow
As both in mildest fits to throw;
They wring their hands in great despair,
And saddest notes burst on the air.
And mid his tears, o'erflowing grief,
Whilst sharp teeth sit in bold relief,
The duke speaks thus in letters brief:
"Though e'er I led an upright life
And ne'er did covet neighbor's wife,
A villain lately ravished mine,
And slaughtered all my kith and kin."
This they no longer more can stand,
Their legs unable to command,
They weeping cast their eyes on high,
And faint away with awful cry.—
Perchance a chick roused by the noise,
T' express her fear cackling employs.
No sooner heard the welcome sound,
Than up sprang Renard with a bound,
And on the chicken having rushed
Its tender head with sharp teeth crushed.
Apprised that food was near at hand,
The Cat with look and gesture bland,
Crept up with care and eyeballs wide,
And soon a plump rat near espied,

And springing, it our Cat soon seized,
And with its fat his bowels greased.

MORAL TO THE FOREGOING.

If listening none have pleasure found,
Or wit intended *didn't* abound,
Suffice, if these impressive truths
Be fairly fixed in minds of youths;
That mere professing, mere declaiming
One's dislike of fraud and stealing,
Are vainly spoken, vainly dealt,
And oft affected, rarely felt;
—Besides—when chickens you eat raw,
Stop at the hind part as you chaw,
For quite unlike both cats and foxes,
You'll find the taste there quite obnoxious:
And as for rats this maxim keep,
Never eat them while asleep.

1866.

A COLLEGE EXERCISE.

INTENDED AS A COMPLIMENT TO THE PRESIDENT ON HIS BIRTH-DAY.

Who has not dreamed of pleasures that were vain,
Who has not wished fulfillment to obtain
Of his most cherished hopes and wished for weal?
Mine was to prove the gratitude I feel
For warmest zeal displayed and tender care
By them who kindly bade, when none elsewhere,
"O, come, our bliss and humble knowledge share."
With this in mind, one night I went to rest,
And little knew my sleep would thus be blessed.
I had a dream; and thought that I in vain
Invoked each muse to fertilize my brain,

And as I loudly called each goddess, none
Acceded to my simple wish,—save one.
And she, so fair a vision that my heart
Throbbed, till I thought its veins would burst apart,
As this, my muse, with Eve and Nature's grace
Appeared. "And ne'er did Grecian chisel trace"
A nymph so fair, or looser folds embrace
A form of finer mould or lovelier face.
Loose on the breeze her golden tresses flew,
Her breast of snow nor paint nor powder knew,
Her eyes so fair, I little recked the hue,
Seemed precious stones to me, nor black nor blue;
They beamed delight, can hardly be defined,
So bright and mild, the picture of the mind.
Nor time had I to fix my eyes on aught,
Save on her face and neck, so finely wrought,
But when she spoke, "those silver sounds so clear
"The listener held his very breath to hear."
"Stranger, who e'er thou art to thee I fly
Obedient to thy summons, from on high;
I heard thy plaintive prayer for a muse,
And thy request I could not well refuse.
If fickle fancy be the muse you seek,
Or still more mild Imagination,—speak."
She scarce had spoke, when my enraptured mind
Seemed to have left this mortal frame behind.
Swift as the shaft from English bow is sped,
Swift as the deer that's startled from his bed,
My spirit, like an evanescent ray
Of sunset left this tenement of clay.
At once I came upon a beauteous isle,
As vanished from my gaze the muse the while;
Indeed the sight I scarce could realize,
And thought at first 'twas blissful paradise.
Just in the midst of this enchanting ground
There stood a palace grand of Time;—'twas round.

(Thus unrelenting time is said to run,
And round and round anew each year begun).
Impelled more by curiosity than aught,
Th' interior of this building round I sought.
On gilded door and wall, and everywhere,
Brave deeds and valiant acts inscribed there were;
And groups of goblin dwarfs both dark and fair,
And sprites uplifted on the desert air,
With brush and chisel diligently plied,
Carved out each mortal feat of valor tried.
On lasting stone in characters of gold
Was Roman Brutus' love of justice told,
Whilst since the fall of man each honored deed
Was there inscribed for future age to read.
Lost in such thought as prompted the event,
I scarce could tell how long the time I spent,
Till all at once a sight burst on my gaze
Which struck me dumb with wonder and amaze.
Old Time, to whom a hundred years is nigh,
And younger grows as sweeping ages fly,
Appeared, as with hard tread the ground he shook.
I recognized him by his cruel look,
And knew him by that unrelenting hand,
Which spares nor rich nor poor throughout the land.
Many a time by wiser lips expressed,
I'd heard it said, e'en by myself confessed,
That time but flies, and suffers no behest.
Yet as I looked he neither walked nor flew,
But solemn came as month and hours do.
In his left hand a dingy clock he held,
Which I at first in innocence beheld;
I little knew how many human souls
Its needle's point without appeal controls.
And at each sound it mournful threw,
He swung about a mighty scythe anew,
And thrones and lofty palaces did rend,

As struck the hour that signified their end.
On goblin's work in fury next he rushed
And glorious deeds remorselessly he crushed;
No more great Cæsar's name resplendent shone,
Or Hector's fame did golden record own;
And as futurity in awe I scanned,
It seemed as though each feat of valor planned,
Was by th' unfeeling brush of Time erased,
Each sacrifice for country was effaced.
But when at last, confiding in his might,
He tried the record of our school to smite,
He stood transfixed, I thought was all aghast,
"This work," confessed, "my hand can never blast.
Decay shall ne'er pollute or change to dust
The record of so well discharged a trust."
I turned my eyes to where that record lay,
And saw this token of a cherished day,
As on a frame encased in glittering gold,
I read these simple words and wishes told:

"Permit us here our parent rare
To wish thee bliss in heaven fair.
As roaming far mid this wide land,
Thou didst extend a helping hand,
And bid us come, when none elsewhere,
Thy bliss and humble knowledge share;
When o'er the world as sinners great,
We wandered far and mourned our fate,
When peace we sought lost in despair,
We came to thee,—and found it there."

1869.

EPITAPH ON A CLASS-MATE.

Kind reader, stop, and say a prayer
For the poor soul of Tom,
And if there be a heaven fair
For Asses,—he'll go *there.*

1866.

THE FALL OF CORINTH.

A COLLEGE EXERCISE.

Rome's eagles soared o'er German soil,
E'er prompt to plunder, to despoil,
And captive Gaul, untamed no more,
Submissive bowed from shore to shore.
Yet though she ruled with lordly sway
A world that knew but to obey,
Greece, once the land of chivalry,
Must quail beneath her tyrany.
And must that land enslaved be,
Greece, once the mother of the free!
Ay! Liberty is their's alone,
Who know what jewel is their own,
And who will dare, will dare to die
With Liberty, their battle-cry!
Rome speaks,—and legions at her word
Rush forth, by hopes of booty spurred,
Till fire and sword, and flaming brand,
Make desolate that conquered land,
For Spartan and Athenians, shame!
O shame!—forget their ancient fame,

And fear its memories to invoke,
And stoop beneath a foreign yoke.
Ah! Greece, thou hadst forgotten true,
Forgot where Cimon, Perseus grew.
But Corinth stood by glories past,
Resolved to struggle to the last,
And sooner than to be a slave,
Preferred a patriotic grave.
When Greeks, ungrateful to their God
Had given up their country's sod,
Corinthian pride rose at the deed,
Corinthia swore to fight—to bleed;
When hired knaves, the slaves of Rome,
Bade them leave Corinth, country, home,
Corinthia's sons rushed to the wall,
They fought like heroes one and all.
Their numbers thinned, their leaders slain,
Still they bore back the foe amain,
Till crushed beneath their battered walls,
They fell where many a warrior falls,
Mid heaps of dead both foe and friend,
Struggling for country to the end.
—'Tis not for student's simple lay
The charge, the stand, the fight portray,
But "noble fall!"—suffice to say,
Her fame bears witness to this day.
Upon this scene had closed the day
That forms the subject of my lay,
And there remained of Corinth naught,
Save what the sword and brand had wrought.
A sad tune mingles with the gale
That loves to sing the mournful wail,
As on the fragments of a tomb,
An image of Corinthia's doom,
There sat a youth in childhood's bloom;
And as each note re-echoes far

Across the dismal track of war,
I listen, and his plaintive lyre
These simple words seem to inspire.—
"This morn I woke as nightingale,
As bright, as gay as now I wail,
I ran to seek my father's kiss
To make him sharer of my bliss.
That head with snow no nobly decked,
Those locks he taught me to respect,
The Roman horse have trampled down
Amid the cinders of our town.
Like thee, O mother, was no friend,
No hand to foster and to tend;
Thine was the smile to soothe each pain,
Each vicious passion to restrain,
Thine, thine—O mother, thine alone—
But mother art thou truly gone,
Gone where no friend, no child, but tears
And grief await thy aged years!
Ay! gone—but not to be a slave,
For soon we meet beyond the grave.
Where are the partners of my life,
Who joyous left us for the strife;
Ay! dead!—but 'tis no lasting doom,
We may *yet* live beyond the tomb.
All the associates dear to me
Now laugh no more in childish glee,
Their youthful limbs us no longer free
Toil on in rude captivity.
—Corinth, once fair, thy doom is told,
Thy sons are gone, their hearts are cold;
Thy pomp, thy wealth the enemy's prey!
O saddest sight—I must away.
Am I thus born, is it my fate
To wander lone and desolate?

I have no home, no country more,
My joys, my hopes—all that is o'er;
Methinks I'll wander to the shore,
Alone my sad fate to deplore,
No friend to me but this, my lyre,
And *there*, sing Corinth,—there expire!"

1870.

A PASTORAL.

Talk of those happy, blissful hours
Mid cooling shades and scented bowers,
Where gentle breezes fresh go by,
And peace all round you greets the eye;
Where here a fountain, there a lake,
Mayhap some timid hare to slake
Its thirst near some pellucid stream,
And trees, and luscious fruits all seem
The real of some fairy dream.
Obscure, unknown, from bloody wars away,
The shepherd's cares are ended with the day.
His are the scenes, the pleasures few enjoy,
And his the bliss fell vice cannot destroy;
A simple faith is all the duty his,
His hope in that, his consolation this;
All pious teachings in his heart take root,
He reaps of what he sows the bounteous fruit,
And Vice seeks less his simple decked abode
Than takes of Fashion the voluptuous road.
No dreaded hour to him the morrows bring,
No tax to pay, no tribute to the King;
All Nature levies on his honest gain,

Is what he eats existence to sustain,
And if he plucks the tribute of a grain,
She thrice returns and lavishes in rain.
—Hail gentle shepherd of the rising flock,
Rouse thee from slumber as the watchful cock,
Greets in his glory Phœbus in the sky,
And wakes the echoes of the gay magpie;
Bestir thy limbs, distribute feed among
The cooing doves, the fowls chirping throng,
Tend well thy sheep, and from thy sylvan shed
Send forth thy dog to turn the males misled.
Extend thyself upon the richest grass,
Chase from thy thoughts the love of peasant lass,
And smooth thy limbs to slumber and repose.
Nor prying wolf, the worst of bloody foes
Disturb thy peaceful nap. The faithful hound,
E'er prompt to spring in readiness from the ground,
Keeps guard the dusky forest all around.
Nor do thy pleasures end with brighest day,
Each moment calls to some employment gay,
And every hour lends some enjoyment thee,
The day sweet thoughts, and eve some lovely she
To sing in moonlit scene some lover's lay,
And through the reed some gentle flame convey.

1871.

EPISTLE TO A. J. D.

Dear Friend, 'tis now a lonesome week
Since I have heard from thee,
I fear me 'tis some foolish pique
Hath thee estranged from me.

Yet as these lines sincere thou'lt read,
Thou'lt recollect a friend,
Remembrance of time past will plead,
Atonement recommend.

Hast heard aught of the Orange fight,
And riot in New York,
Methinks 'tis always might makes right
Against the men of Cork.

What news hast thou that every time
Thou failest at the place,
Art sick, or lodged in gaol for crime,
Or fearest for thy face?

Lest evening walks or open air
Or ray of sunshine bright,
Will make it less polite or fair
Or pleasing to the sight?

For shame!—we boys, care not for looks;
And worse thou couldst not be
Than Nature made thee;—even dukes
Oft look as bad as thee.—

Come let us part, if part we must,
As friends should always do,
And so, to see thee soon I trust,
I bid thee sweet Adieu.

Dear me, I had almost forgot,
(So dizzy is my brain),
To tell the hope of fun be got,
(Pray that it be not rain)
By fishing party at the lake,
(O would it were with thee)
The fishes we are going to take
How merry it will be!

1871.

TO N * * * * *

There is a maid, all smiles and love,
Mine eye has often joyed to see,
Combines the sweetness of the dove
With unaffected modesty.

There is a form whose pure outline
Is wanting but a seraph's wing
T' endow it with a look divine,
If *that* could more of beauty bring.

Blessed be the hand that modelled her,
And on this wayward earth bestowed
One who with wings would soon transfer
Her soul to some more blessed abode.

There is a lip like Cupid's bow
Whose strings distended ne'er in vain,
Its accents as from honey flow,
Though sweet and smooth, pierce hearts in twain.

There is a being, mine alone,
There is a voice can be but her's,
That were I seated on a throne,
Would be my angel-messengers.

There is an eye whose glance I've met,
And in that glance I've read a thing,
Distracts with joy my soul as yet,
And *evermore*—long as that soul and body cling.

Blessed be the hand that modelled her,
And on this wayward earth bestowed
One who with wings would soon transfer
Her soul to some more blessed abode.

1871.

STANZAS.

I gave her love, esteem, respect,
(What more can lover give!)
She leaves me pine in sad neglect,
And makes it hard to live.

Nor satisfied with what I gave,
She ravished me my heart,
Consigns me to an early grave,
And bids me soon depart.

—But why should endless be my wail,
Why should I grieve to live
For one whose charms from Satan hail
And has no heart to give.

Her modest ways are artful snares
E'en Satan can affect;
Muse! lend thine aid to end love's cares
And thine elect protect.

1870.

TO N * * * * *

As fades the twilight o'er the lea,
Darker and darker over the sea,
Thus fade the hopes conceived of thee,
Thy truth and thy fidelity.

Thy charms on some fell purpose bent,
Make scores of victims every day,
And each, his heart all piece-meal rent,
A lesson learns from beauty's sway.

Ah! siren, many a youthful hope
Hath stranded on thy luring shore,
Yet more have struggled hard to cope
Against one whom they must adore.

Poor victim of thy witching smile,
Haunted forever by thine eye,
No hope is left me but exile,
No other freedom save to die.

No hope is left my tears to dry,
Unless some fairer vision came,
I fear me 'tis alone on high,
In heaven is another same.

1870.

IMPROMPTU.

Thy music maid is sweet enough,
Inspired—if you will,
But could I dance to it with thee,
'Twere sweeter music still.—

FORGET!

O ask it not, sweet maid, of me
Forever to forget
That once I lived for love and thee
And live to love thee yet.

Ask not of memory to forget,
Forget the cherished past,
Chide not the feelings if they feel,
Or love thee to the last.

Forget! can I forget the time,
When lovingly at play
Naught stood between our plighted faith—
And why this change to-day?

Take from me all that I can give,
All, all that yet is mine,
The little that is left of me
I willingly resign.

But ask it not, dear girl, of me
Forever to forget
That once I lived for love of thee,
And live to love thee yet.

—'Tis one thing, girl, to be forgot,
Another—to forget,
O, ask me that which I can give,
But not that I forget.

1870.

TIGHT BOOTS.

May the deuce take the scoundrel, whose damnable trade
Is to crush up the foot with boots, "custom-made,"
And whose only ambition to furnish a case
To the doctor of bunions, that other disgrace.

Not to speak of the corns, Oh! those terrible corns,
That enter the flesh like so many sharp thorns,
And surviving the efforts of razor and quack,
Doom the man to the torments and pains of the rack.

1871.

YES.

But one short word and you are mine,
Mine now and mine fore'er,
But one sweet word at heaven's door,
And soon we enter there.

But say the word, but speak it, dear,
And earth will hold no more
Two hearts, two souls, not made to love
Each other, but adore.

And why delay that blessed sound,
When bliss awaits us here,
When we have but to wish, to hope
And nothing, girl, to fear;

When I but ask, sweet maid, your love,
To me the "promised land,"
And ask no more, but take no less
Than both your heart and hand.

But one sweet word, and you are mine,
One word my love to bless,
O answer, ere I cease to hear,
Sweet maiden, say but "yes!"

1871.

TO * * * * * *

Dear girl, can I unmoved view
That softly heaving breast,
Those eyes so gentle, yet so bright,
Those lips as yet unpressed.

Oh! can I dwell upon that face,
That face and not adore,
Say, can I gaze upon that form
And fail to love it more!

—Yet why recall thy face again
When we had better part,
When one more fortunate than I
May soon possess thy heart?

Why think of thee when in a day,
I may a stranger be,
And when another may soon snatch
Thy willing heart from me!

Why dwell upon those dreamy eyes,
That softly steal the soul,
And leave your thoughts, your wishes all,
Your love beyond control;

Those eyes that haunt me night and day,
That leave me never free,
That like the very loadstone draws
Each fluttering heart to thee;

Those eyes that beaming, shining still,
And looking down your own,
Would light a quenchless fire there,
And melt a heart of stone!

Those eyes, those eyes divinely sweet,
Too sweet by far for me,
Dear girl, have almost left me dead;—
—What have they done for thee?

1871.

EPISTLE TO A. J. D.

O for the pen of Delavine,
His wit and happy strain,
Or inspiration from the Nine,
His excellence to gain!

—Dear Friend, when love-sick youth to-day,
I scarce did aught but sigh,
Your kind address and tender lay,
Brought tears into my eye.

Its soothing words and joyous strain
Found entrance to my heart,
And chasing thence a racking pain
Drew all its cares apart.

Alas! in vain you whisper "hope,"
My soul is all forlorn,
Against despair it cannot cope,
Its strength is well-nigh worn.

—Why should I hope when o'er my brow
My hair is growing grey;
Once, *once* I hoped, but weary now
Is this poor piece of clay.

Would that *one* loved as you love me,
Dear friend, as faithfully,
How blissful then and heavenly
That loving love would be!

1871.

ON A LADY SEEN THE PRECEDING EVENING.

Was she a being of the earth,
The maid I saw last night,
So full of glee, and childish mirth,
So beauteous to the sight!
Was she an angel from the sky,
Or shrine of divine love,
So much of sweetness in her eye,
And virtue from above!

Was it a tempter from below,
A devil in her shape,
A Lucifer from hell!—if so,
For man's damnation weep.
—Is there aught sinful in that gaze,
In that angelic smile,
Without whose influence I would craze,
Or die in willed exile!

And was she made as you and I,
That vision of a night,
Which yester burst upon my eye,
To-day—snatched out of sight!
—O cruel fate, if nevermore,
I see that form again,
A form I saw, but now adore
In common with all men.

1871.

SATIRE VI—BOILEAU.

What on earth is this uproar, these noises so dire,
Is it not, say, to sleep that here people retire,
And what cursed of demons each night on this spot
Is assembling the cats in each gutter begot!
'Tis in vain that I scramble from bed in a fright,
It does seem as though hell were itself in my sight,
Whilst the one loudly screeches, or tiger-like groans,
And another an infant, so plaintively moans.
Would to God this were all, but the mice and the rats
But to keep me awake, seem to join with the cats,
More annoying to me during each night obscure
Than was ever in day-time the abbe of Pure.
All conspires at once to disturb my repose,
And here I complain of the least of my woes,
For scarce have the roosters, beginning to crow
In shrill tones awakened the people below,
Than a horrible blacksmith, scarce out of his bed,
With his hammer and anvil, splits open my head.
'Tis already I hear every vehicle drive,
Every mason at work, and shop-keepers alive,
Whilst above them the den of loud tinkering bells
Cause the skies to re-echo with funeral knells,
And joining the hail and rain torrents that vie,
Just to honor the dead, cause the living to die.
—Notwithstanding; I'd bless Providential decree
If no further misfortune had fallen to me,
But if while in my bed I impatiently curse,
When I step in the street it is twenty times worse;
And wherever I go there is scarce elbow-room
For the crowd that is moving; and such is my doom,
That a man cannot pass without jostling my hat,
Or striking a rafter sharp into my pate.

Here a funeral train blocks your way full an hour,
Whilst the coachmen drive as slow as is in their power;
Besides which the schoolboys will pelt at each dog,
Setting each passer swearing, old men all agog,
And from every house-top busy masons will pour
Brick and mortar, and slate in a plentiful shower.—
—On a cart overladen a long, heavy spar
Swells the crowd that increases in size from afar;
Sixteen horses attached to this ponderous weight
On the slippery street drag a slow, weary gait.
'Gainst a carriage in turning it runs rather rude,
And the shock rolls it o'er in a soft pile of mud;
Whilst another essaying to steer mid the wreck
Finds in vehicles split an impassable check.
Twenty hacks in a moment arriving in file,
Are soon followed by numbers in length full a mile,
And to cap the climax of this ill-fated day
Five and twenty wild oxen appear on the way.
Each one struggles to pass; these bellow, those curse,
But the passage is narrow, the jam, worse and worse,
And as file upon file, the wayside blockades,
In the bosom of peace there appear barricades.
Naught is heard but confused exclamations of ire,
And the voice e'en of thunder therein would expire.—
But I, who am late, and delayed on my way
Am quite fearful to notice the fading of day,
And scarce knowing my life to what saint recommend
Now determine to speed at all cost to my end.
I leap o'er twenty gutters, I dodge as I rush
Through the crowd that is threatening my person to crush,
And rejoice me at last to be out of the rub
When Bermudez and horse splash me all full of mud.
Wishing scarce to be seen in so slimy a plight,
Not aware of the road, I escape where I might,
And as oft in the dark am removing the stain

From my ill-fated clothes—it commences to rain.
It would seem as though heaven had melted away,
Or resolved to renew the great deluge that day.
To cross over the street in the midst of the storm,
A thin plank laid across a small passage does form;
The most hardy of men steps it over with care,
And yet venture I must—there's no crossing elsewhere.
In the meantime the waters from each roof that fall
Have made rivers of gutters and torrents of all.
Yet I stumble across as in spite of delay,
The darkness of night hurries me on my way;
For as soon as the shadows noctural appear,
But the shop-keepers close their windows in fear,
And scarce does each peaceful merchant retire
In the profits and sales of the day to enquire,
And that all in the market is calm and serene,
Than garroters and robbers appear on the scene.
The most lonely of forests, and desolate wood
Is then more secure than this city of blood.
Bad luck to the man whom his business delayed
Till an hour undue. He will soon be waylaid
By four scoundrels who pointing a knife at your heart,
"Sir, your purse or your life." With your gold you must part;
Or resist if you will, so that "tragical end"
May appear in the press some sensation to lend.
—As for me every evening at setting of sun,
'Tis my custom in bed these adventures to shun,
And there quiet to yield me to sleep and repose,
After taking good care my windows to close.
But alas; I have hardly extinguished my light,
But again all is noise through the rest of the night.
Robbers, knaves, in a score, with grape-shot and ball
Make assault through the doors and the lattices all.
On all sides I hear cry, "help, help, murder and fire,"

As the blaze from a neighbor's comes nigher and nigher.
I, more dead than alive, and trembling with fright,
Oft am running in shirt-tail the most of the night,
For the flames in a volume their wings they deploy
And soon make of our quarter a new blazing Troy,
Whilst a hundred starved Greeks, all eager for spoil
To leave nothing untouched perseveringly toil,
Till at last the cracked walls tumble down in a mass,
And what once was my fortune is ruin, alas!*
—As for me quite surprised at the dawning of day
I betake me to bed and to sleep where I may.

1871.

TO N * * * * *

Tell me sweet maid, are thine eyes blue,
Or brown, or grey, or blackest hue!
Are they not brown at evening fall,
Of various hues in festive hall,
As sorrow, grief or joy in turn
Cause them to soften or to burn!

If black, they look as purest gleam
Of sunshine with a brighter beam,
And cause a budding love to grow
Each time they glance or flicker so;
If blue, they softly steal the soul
And draw it off beyond control;
If brown, they captivate, if grey
Eclipse the splendor of the day.

*Here particularly occurs a distant departure from the text. The whole translation in fact, can at best but give a very faint idea of the original.

For me, I've seen them every hue,
Both brown and black, and felt them too,
As softly creeping o'er my soul
Each spark of love for woman stole.

1869.

[NOTE.—The preceding pieces, as their various dates will imply, were written at a very early age, a fact, which, I trust, will sufficiently explain, if not altogether excuse their countless faults and inelegancies. I have preferred leaving them as they appear, crude and unpolished, although some retouching had, if not improved, at least, redeemed them from the imputation of gross negligence. If they do not prove even acceptable to an indulgent taste, I shall regret—not that I have left them in their primitive state, but that they were inserted here at all, although I do not wish it to be inferred that what is yet to come possesses any really greater merit, since the same plea may indeed be offered for the whole.]

TO N * * * * *

Why is that heart, once gay and glad,
Dear girl, the saddest of the sad,
And why that bitterness of smile,
Which once could every care beguile?
Say, can it be that some fond dream
Hath vanished like a fitful beam,
And left thee nothing but the pain
That disappointed hopes retain!

Or but a passing spell—a speck,
That like the fleecy clouds that deck
The soft serenity of day,
Within the week will pass away!
—Yet why that shroud that hangs o'er thee,
And tells of grief?—say, can it be,
That some departed spirit dear
To those fond eyes have brought a tear!

And are they, say, to speak no more,
Those eyes that thrilled my heart before,
Or cannot love, love deep and true,
Restore thy mirth, thy smiles anew?
—Yet wear that sweet, expressive face
Of resignation in their place;
It suits thy heart, fond girl, as well,
For grief its goodness best can tell.

And wilt thou weep when I am gone,
When *I* am numbered with the dead!
Ah—no! I would not have *thee* weep,
E'en though those tears for me be shed;

And wilt thou lay some humble flower
Upon my newly opened grave,
To tell where unrequited love
Hath brought thy poor, devoted slave?

Some flower to wither on my tomb,
Doomed, unlike thee, to bloom no more,
To perish, lose its fragrance there,
And die—where I had died before?

—And wilt thou weep when I am gone,
When I am counted of the dead,
Ah—no! how could I have thee weep,
What though those tears for me were shed!

I would not dim that eye of thine
For all the gold that earth can give,
For did I wound that tender heart
That wound—I scarcely could outlive.—

1873.

A SENTIMENT.

May God, sweet maid, make heaven to thee,
What thou hast made this earth for me.

ANOTHER.

Here's to the lass whose bright eyes shine
  As brightly as this wine,
Whose lips to me were sweeter than—
  The juices of the vine.

1873.

TO N * * * * *

It was a summer eve at close of day,
When all is love beneath a Southern sky,
That she, fond maiden, led my heart astray
With she soft glances of her beaming eye.
Ay—what a thrill of happiness untold
Ran through my veins as she sat by so meek,
Until I felt her pure and virgin breath
Sport with the blushes of my burning cheek.
And when she plucked a lily from the bank,
And placed it softly on her throbbing breast,
O how I wished that I, and *not* the flower,
Might only die within that gentle nest.
—'Tis then I lifted up my eyes to hers,
When she, obedient at my mute demand,

Took from her breast that token of our love,
And placed it meekly in my trembling hand.
How—how I yearned to snatch her to my arms,
To kiss those lips impressed by mine alone,
To smooth the ringlets off her burning cheek,
And feel her bosom beat upon my own!

1873.

THAT WINDOW!

Why looks that window now so lone,
So dreary and so sad,
Because there's naught remains to cheer,
No! naught to make it glad.

Because each hour of the day,
The curtain hides no heart,
Or fairest hands to set aside,
Or draw its folds apart;

No laughing, sweet, seraphic face,
Or dimpled, blushing cheek,
No eyes, black eyes, that need no tongue,
No memory to speak.

And where the glance that once I met
From o'er the window sill,
The glance that caused my heart to throb,
And makes it tremble still.

And where the heart that bright and pure,
Once beat behind that screen,
And beat still faster—may I hope—
When by the gazer seen!

—Alas! both heart and eyes are now
At window caught no more,
'Tis why that window is so lone
And why I thus deplore.

Yet often with a vain, vain hope,
My glances wander there,
Until it seems as though I saw
Above—her image fair.

And often at the usual hour,
And on th' accustomed day,
I gaze in vain upon that spot,
And weeping turn away.—

1873.

TO A * * * *

Why ever throbs my beating heart
When thinking still of thee,
Still thee—thy name is ever on my lips,
Thine image near to me?

Why shaking with a nameless fear,
Whene'er to thee I speak,
I feel the blushes on my face
Reflected on thy cheek?

Why do I ever dread to see
The softness of thy glance,
And when perchance our glances meet,
I feel as in a trance.

Ah! why?—'tis more than I could tell,
And more than I could feel,
Did I, imploring at thy feet,
To thee forever kneel.

Ask of thine own, thy beating heart,
And if it do not tell,
Then shall I speak, dear girl, my love,
A love you know too well.—

1873.

TO C * * *

There is a vision bright and sweet,
Floats ever near my dazzled eyes,
Too fair for earth, and yet too true,
To be a native of the skies.

O let me worship at that shrine,
Fair maid, to thee forever kneel,
Content to dwell unnoticed there,
If but thy presence I can feel.

And yet forgive if growing bold,
Presuming on thy winning grace,
I raise to thine my daring glance,
And fondly gaze upon thy face.—

Forgive, if drinking in thine eyes
The life that now is mine no more,
I feel 'tis even greater far
To love thine image than adore.

O give me soon those mellow eyes,
That shrinking form to press,
Those lips to cherish, and those locks
To fondle and caress;

Give me those blushes to protect,
Something to live and die for,
And give me liberty to shield
Thy virtue and thine honor;

Or let me lay me down to sleep,
The sleep that knows no waking,
And dead—watch o'er thy virgin head
The Vigils of the Loving!

TO A NATCHEZ NYMPH.

Sweet girl, forgive, if for a time,
A moment of insane conceit,
I fancied all your native "belles"
Less fair than those I'm wont to meet.
Forgive, if basking in the sunlight,
The mellow sunshine of thine eye,
The thought of wandering from thy side,
Found vent into a fretful sigh.

'Tis that thy genial smile of sympathy,
So welcome when afar we roam,
Recalled to me the grateful memory
Of *one* that I had left at home.
And take me not to be unfaithful,
If this new passion I must own,
Though I may humbly worship *two*,
Sweet charmer, true love is but *one*.

—Forgive if having grown too bold,
My feelings swelled into a flood
So kin to love, I could not stay
The gushes of a warmer blood.
'Tis that astray upon this earth,
Unused to face the stranger stare,
I yearned to touch a heart so kind,
And cause to glow a cheek so fair!

Because alike the tender nestling,
Who wandering from the parent breast,
Meets with a gentle hand to foster,
And lead it to as warm a nest,
So miles away from native soil,
And cast upon a foreign shore,
I felt beneath thy magic glance,
As though I were at home once more.—

Think not that mid the busy scenes
Of city life, I shall forget,
One whom among her lovely hills,
The loveliest of the land, I met.
'Twas ay, one evening as the sun
Retreated from before thy beauty,
And why—I know not—but I swear,
Dear girl, it never set so lovely.—

Nymph of thy many streams and dells,
Lend me but once thy magic wand,
That I may touch thy heartstrings o'er,
And round us draw a closer bond.
Say that to hope and memory dear
Shall be—whatever may betide—
The short-lived moments that I spent
So full of rapture by thy side.—

—Think not that other charms than thine
Shall soon across my vision fly,
Though many be the fair I meet
Thou, thou *alone* shalt fill my eye.
No! there is too much in thy form,
—A form so witchingly begot—
Too much within thy genial soul
Of the divine—to be forgot.

Yet we may never meet again,
Yet we have parted, and I wonder,
That known so *little*, so *much* loving,
Our hearts can beat at-all—asunder.
Farewell!—believe thou hast no heart,
No gratitude as fond as mine,
That I shall be, if not in love,
At least in friendship—Ever Thine.—

DUNBARTON, near NATCHEZ, 1875.

TO A SERVANT GIRL.

Ah! gone, but not fore'er I trust,
That short-lived vision of a face,
A form, sweet Innocence herself,
Daughter of Modesty and Grace.

And whose that alabaster throat,
Those locks of mellow, auburn hue,
Those long, dark, sweeping, silken lashes,
Shading an eye of deepest blue.

Those lashes, ay, methink I see them,
  Resting on a cheek of snow,
Clouding true, and yet reflecting
  All the flame that burns below.

As the clouds that in the evening,
  Bathing in the glow of gold,
Catch each parting ray of sunshine,
  Loth to lose their precious hold.

Whose that ever-flitting blush,
  That unbidden comes and goes
On a cheek where nature-sown,
  Bloom the lily and the rose;
Whose that dimple, faultless, peerless,
  Pouring out the love it sips,
Laughing when she laughs, and smiling
  At the smile upon her lips.

Whose that form, so pure in outline
  That no thought, no ill desire,
Dare pollute its hallowed precincts,
  Or abuse its sacred fire!
Classic, ay! so gently moulded
  That the witchery of its breast,
'Neath her shroud so jealous guarded,
  Cannot stir—but stands confessed.

And whose the charms! O pomp, and power,
O wealth and art, enslaved all,
Usurp the sway no more!—'tis thine
Alone O *Beauty* to enthrall!

She rules;—let none dispute her sway,
Let all men tremble at her word;
Beauty!—to thee be ever sworn
The poet's pen, the warrior's sword.

—A servant girl, 'tis all I sing,
One born to toil, to fade too soon;
Too soon? ah! no! for charms like her's
Too often are a fatal boon.

—God grant no Satan steal thy heart,
No lurking foe destroy thy name;
Toil on, good girl, yet watch and pray,
Lest human fiends cause thy shame.

Many have wealth, have gems, all, all
Unknown to thy ignorable lot,
Riches, that dazzle and amaze,—
Yet them, chaste maiden, envy not.

Ah! there are none so poor as they,
Who from the path of right depart,
There is no richer woman than
The woman with the truer heart.—

1875.

TO A LADY IN WHOSE EYE AN UNFEELING REMARK OF THE WRITER HAD BROUGHT A TEAR.

Dear girl, forgive, if in an hour,
Fraught with I know not what, of shame,
Distraction, madness, I did cause
Such torture to thy tender frame.
Yet not one pang of sorrow there,
Shot through thy bosom but made known
To mine, the anguish of my soul
In fellow feeling with thine own.

How could you ever think that I,
Designedly would dare distort,
The soft complacence of thy gaze,
Or cause thy bosom once to smart.
Thou little knowest, girl, the breast,
That wrong suspicions so unjust,
Or workings of the upright heart
So undeserving *thy* distrust.

And yèt, I may not ever tell
Thee now, since they must be repressed,
How anger, hate, resentment are
Impulsive foreign to that breast;
I may not tell how many tears
Thine own unkindness caused to mine,
Nor how thy fond adorer once,
Is now a penitent at thy shrine.

—I would not give thy bosom pain,
Nor live to see its silent agony,
Could I at such a price obtain
The godly gift of immortality.
Believe me, there is so much sympathy
Between our mutual souls, that neither
Sorrow, the throes of death itself,
Could stifle *one*—and spare the *other*.

Yet stay!
I would not for the world recall
The tear that lurking in thy lid,
Not one iota of its love
Subdued, or half its rapture hid.
I would not for thyself have missed
The tear that glistened in thine eye,
Like dew-drop on the fairest violet
That ever bloomed beneath the sky.

That tear, so loth its precious hold
To lose, fell not, but beaming there,
Reflecting all its lustre, shone
Like brightest gems, with thrice the glare;
Flashing a thousand colors, shining
Like ray of concentrated light,
So meek withal, and gently loving,
It dazzled, as it charmed the sight.

But ah!
Not all the rapture woke to life,
Not all the beauties it evoked,
Were compensation for the pain,
My foolish prattle had provoked,
I felt 'twas I had struck the blow,
But O unmeaningly, believe,
I knew not you would take it so,
And saw not fitting cause to grieve.

I saw I wounded thee, but then,
That cut, ay, even now to cure,
What sacrifice could I not make,
What torture could I not endure!
And let me think when once again
A smile had lit thy visage more,
No rankling wound was left behind
And naught that stranger was before.

—If thou hast ever seen the sky
O'erclouded, and the rain impair,
Dear girl,—one moment of suspense,—
The matchless azure of the air,
Then seen the gloom, yet lingering, leave
The vault of heaven, an exile,
The earth resume its pristine look,
Nature once more responsive smile

To all the glories of the sun,
Decked in their hymeneal garb,—
Then thou must know how much I joyed
To see thee, like that blazing orb,
Dispel th' impending clouds, spread o'r
Thy fairy form the wonted cheer,
Carol to dawn of day once more,
And smile away that wistful tear.

Ah! how I watched thee;—and as sweet
Returning to thy pale cheek, came
The sunlight, not a thousand tears
Unchecked, had quenched that new-born flame.
Ah, how I watched thee, and as bright
Upon the liquid of thine eye,
It shone, I thought there burst to light
The purest rain-bow of the sky.

And not the promise of the Lord
To man, when, symbol of the birth
Of fairer days, that cheerful sign
Had crowned the heavens and the earth,
No, nor the "olive branch" of peace
To Noah by the gentle dove
Conveyed, to signify the wrath
Of Heaven had turned to thoughts of love,

More grateful to the storm-tossed of
The Ark, so soon to be set free,
And flushed with new-born hopes,—than was
That ray of sunshine *then* to me.—

—Yet, what are tears to thee but stars
That light the heaven of thy face,
When Night hath drawn its mantle o'er
The lines that Memory still can trace;

And what are sighs but passing shadows,
Deepening the lustre of thy heart,
A gem—so beautifully fair—
It is of thee, the counterpart!

So— weep on, sigh on, for the earth
Holds not another like to thee,
Thy place is heaven, and thy sphere
Beatitude—so may it be!

In the early spring of 1876, I was accosted by a maimed Confederate soldier who was offering for sale a few patriotic stanzas. Deeming them scarcely suited for an already much demoralized market, I volunteered to furnish him with some verses of my own. He gratefully accepted;—and I had the satisfaction of subsequently learning, that he had found an increased sale for his new issue of lyrical pieces, and especially as he had fixed the price of my own modest effusion—at ten cents. Prompted by a motive, which, I trust, will scarce be deemed an unworthy one, I had furnished him with—in substance—the following:—

CHANCELLORSVILLE.

Virginia! what a name thou hast to cheer
Thy soldiers onward in their proud career,
And what a stirring memory to fire
The warrior's sabre, or the minstrel's lyre.—
The Muse of Valor and of Virtue thou,
Let but a touch of filial duty now
Lift up its voice in justice to thy woe,
And lend these lowly lines a latent glow;
Strike but a spark within this humble breast,
So often to thy panting bosom pressed,
And lulled to slumber by the moaning ball
With close behind the funereal pall,—
Strike but a flame, inspiring, vivid, bright,
To dazzle even in the living light,
Nor shun the minstrel, for th' electric spark
Lives in the bosom of the putrid bark.—

Stonewall!—there lives within the human soul
A virtue that no tyrant can control;
There lives the worship of the great and good,
That is the patriot and the hero's food,
The reverence for the sacred dead that should
Live on—if die a thousand deaths they could.
Stonewall!—there never was a name so dear,
Or heart so true as thine; no, nor a tear,
Like to the tear that fell upon thy bier,
Swollen at every heart, at every eye
Increased, till all from weeping had run dry.
O poignancy of grief, ne'er had thy blow
So keenly struck the chord of universal woe!

—Yet stay;—there slowly creeping o'er the bloody soil,
Whilst o'er them ply the missiles of the fatal broil,
I see them. O and what a sight!—foot-sore and pale,
Exhausted by continuous marches, they still hail
Unconquered and unconquerable e'er the day
To turn upon the foe the ire of the fray.
And then, scarce had the fresh and guileless-tinted Morn
Begun each dew-drop paint, each tree-top to adorn,
Than timid to behold the dread array of arms,
She hesitating stood, a prey to just alarms!
Now came, and then afflicted fled, then nearer came,
One moment viewed the scene of carnage and of shame,
Then closed her wings in fright, and veiled her moistened
eyes,
Till ill-foreboding vapors filled the clouded skies.

Then, mingling with the sounds that smote the deafened ear,
And filled each gentler breast with awe-inspiring fear,
Then rose the Southron cheer to yankee known so well.
The slogan of the South, the frenzied "rebel" yell.
See yon proud columns rise, in serried ranks rush by

Across the bloody field where full as many lie,
Yet see the buried bullet fell the leaping throng,
And on its red track hurl the stiffening dead along,
And see the crazed charger dashing through the plain,
For palsied now the hand that held the guiding rein;
Mark there the dying with one vital spark yet left,
The wounded, of all vital hope not yet bereft,
Sickening the sight with gore, with blood all newly flown,
Rending the sickened ear with torture-laden groan.

Mark there the dread artillery crush the panting breast,
Start the convulsive spasm, the shriek ere then repressed,
As though 'twere not enough for soldiers to defy
The foe, and though expiring sound their country's cry,
But they must feel the blow of brothers ere they die.
Ah! fratricide, and widow's weeds and woes—these are
Thy triumphs, Death! those are thy boasted glories, War!

Yet now they closer come with firm and martial tread,
Nor heed the blasting thunder, or the pelting lead;
Hundreds go gallant down, the ragged ranks grow spare,
As through the moving mass the grape-shot hiss and tear.
Here fell Destruction reaps her harvesting of spoil,
And Hatred heartless revels in the fatal broil;
Here Pandemonium lets its evil spirits loose,
Till Mercy loudly, but unheeded, pleads for truce;
Nor stayed the hand of Slaughter till from sheer abuse,
Exhausted Spite has sunk, and sated Carnage ceased
To glut its eager cravings at the human feast.

Still on, and bravely on, the Southron columns roll,
Vain, vain, the feast—the death—they near the dreadful goal.
The long line cheering now its final plunge prepares,
O time, one moment more, and Victory is theirs.

But O ill-fated hour!—What now?—the Southrons pause,
They reel, fall back, they fly! O who can save the cause!
They fly! Who fly? Virginians, Georgians, Southrons fly?
No! never! they may lose the day, but then—they die.

O panoply of War! O carnival of blood;
New batteries now the plain with fresher torrents flood,
And unmasked cannons, spending their death-dealing ire,
Sweep down the doomed mass with enfilading fire.
—Dwindled to but a few, the shattered remnants yield,
Yet stubbornly contest the well disputed field,
Nor turn their manly bosoms to th' elated foe,
But steadily confront them even as they go!

—The day is lost; but no! there is another hope,
Thank God! and Heaven give them fortitude to cope
Against the fearful odds, with high hope them imbue,
Arm them with Thine own strength, inspire them anew.
—See yonder to the rescue, double-quick and fresh,
New heroes boldly surge, and bravely forward dash;
They too are few, but firm, the chosen of the land,
'Tis stubborn foe indeed their onset can withstand.

—On, on, they dashing come, nor for a moment heed
The friends that newly die, the wounds that freshly bleed;
Right in they rush—the raging furnace of the fray,
Till blood jets from the tide, as from the billows, spray.
But O again they pause—their courage is in vain,
Their leaders all are down, half their own numbers slain,
The foe with dread effect their fire unpitying ply,
And darkening Despair hangs o'er the Southern sky.
The crisis is at hand!—but at that dreadful hour,
When to redeem the day seems out of human power,
Breasting the brunt of battle, a mark upon his steed
For every fatal bullet, Colston takes the lead;
Re-forms the broken line, imbues it with fresh fires,
Cheers the least daring on, all equally inspires.

—Then sounds the magic "charge," and waves on high his
blade,
That word so often heard was ne'er so well obeyed.
"Charge!"—ay, 'twas certain death;—yet—Death thou hast
a charm
For him whose cause is just, whose consecrated arm
Is Right!—The soldier whose ambition is to die,
To mount the breach at freedom's battle-cry,
Dreads not at cannon's mouth to feel thy cold embrace,
Nor shuns disheartened there, to meet thee face to face!

—And on, and on they charge, with bristling steel before,
And their fierce war-cry peals the din of battle o'er.
Not Death, attended with the horrors of the fray,
No Hell with all its demon terrors in array,
Can stop them now; thrice armed because by God they fight,
And ten-fold stronger now because 'tis for the Right.

—Yet lost amid the smoke of battle, the funeral pall
Of chieftain and of private who in common fall,
Of husband and of son, of more than many brave,
They struggle on—leap past the cannon; then, O wave,
Defiant standard of the Cause, thy work is done,
The hostile works are theirs! the victory is won.

Delusive hope; for still meek Pity pleads in vain,
And still insatiate Carnage stalks the bloody plain;
Prepares new blood to shed, new lives to immolate,
And rallies to the treat the followers of Hate.
—For moving forward now in one unswerving tide,
Alike the angry foam that on the billows ride,
The Northern foe in turn with cannon in the rear
Come bravely, steady on, and know not flight or fear.
Like grass before the scythe they on each other fall,
Yet forward boldly push in one unbroken wall.

Close to the works they come, deliberately fire,
The foremost ranks go down, the hindmost now are nigher.
—Yet no! they cannot triumph over Nature's laws,
Nor stand the trying test of fortitude, because
Their's not the holy dash, the ardor unrepressed,
No, nor the sacred warmth that cheers the Southern breast.

—They reel, throw down their arms, then craven turn about,
Disordered fly! great God—it is a shameful rout,
And soon the spreading panic, catches each extreme,
Till Fear the hindmost wings, and Terror reigns supreme.
But O unpitying fate, fatality of war,
The day is not yet won, and victory still is far.
—For soon along the line, throughout the whole expanse,
The bugle winds the signal for a new advance.
Battalions freshly formed, and thousands yet untried,
E'en as the ocean wide, resistless as the tide,
Answer the fresh impulse and crowd the tottering plain,
And marshaled the reserve the battle to regain.

Deep roars the solemn cannon, shrill the whistling ball,
"Forward," th' unceasing cry, the trumpet's thrilling call.
—The moment is supreme; and bursting shell, and shot,
The foot, the plunging horse, and every ill begot
By men to victimize, by Hell itself to slay,
Weighs down upon the Southron ranks in dread array;
Impending doom hangs o'er the brave, devoted band,
And Fate relentless threatens with uplifted hand.

—And yet, they hold their own, nor yield the foe one inch,
Whilst life and motion last, 'tis not in them to flinch.
They hold their own, and more,—charge after charge repel;
God grant the day to them that combat e'er so well!
And lo! that steadfast band despairing to defeat,
The baffled foe in awe prepare them to retreat;

Already anxious Fear asserts her own again,
And potent Panic now resumes her fatal reign,
When sudden as the thunder at the Maker's will,
The Southron shout is hushed, the Southern works grow still.

And O most trying turn in fickle fortune's tide,
The courage of that banded few, so sorely tried,
Is vain—ay, vainer now than was an hour ago,
The fierce tumultuous onset of the Northern foe.—
For now their idle guns, incapable of harm,
Are dumb,—their speechless cannon, worse than useless arm,
Repose neglected by, till they can but oppose
Their bare and bleeding bosoms to the hostile blows.

Yet firmly as before, and with a wild despair,
And conscious of the fate, the certain death they dare,
They plant their colors down, the new onslaught abide,
And swear beneath its cross to perish side by side.
—Nor slow to view their sad distress, the craven throng
Of Yankeedom in arms, full twice ten thousand strong,
Re-form their scattered columns, quickly wheel about,
Then headlong forward plunge with one derisive shout.

—Then might Thy Finger, Lord, great God of what is best,
Thy strength to right the wrong been there made manifest;
Then well might Constantine have risen from the dead,
And ay, his Roman legions to the rescue led;
Then might symbolic of the Faith, the sacred cross
Have in as fair a cause high heaven flashed across,
Renewed the Southern ardor, terrorized the foe,
And charged the Southron arms with meteoric glow.

—Then might in God's revenge, the messenger of Death
Have felled the Northern hosts with pestilential breath,
Until Assyria's cohorts, once again laid low,
Had fertilized the plain, and fed the carrion-crow.

Then too might Joshua's word have marshaled forth the sun,
To bide in meek obedience till the day was won;
And, prodigy sublime!—that Jackson had been there,
To lead his own again to deeds of marvel dare.

—But ah! disabled now, to crying wounds a prey,
The chieftain lowly lies, unconscious of the fray;
Hushed—silent now the voice that woke ecstatic life,
And smote the foe with fear in many a heated strife;
—Save when the pallid lips in meek devotion bear
Their tribute to the Deity in a muttered prayer,
Or save when wild delirium rends his troubled brain,
He sounds once more the charge, and sweeps the bloody plain.
—Subdued the eye of fire, paralyzed the arm
That in the brunt of battle worked so potent charm,
And tame the noble spirit, foster-child of God,
His soul belongs to Him—himself, his native sod;
But spared his dying hours, and foreign to his ken,
The brave, sublime devotion of his gallant men.

—Meantime, the Southron few seem destined to succomb,
By dint of numbers and ill-fortune overcome;
Yet they surrender not, but ply the bayonet thrust,
'Tis more than one invader bites the trampled dust.
They club their gory guns, the last and forlorn hope;
The Southrons fewer grow, but still more fiercely cope.

The fight is hand to hand;—the sword, the bowie-knife
Bestow the "coup de grace," for 'tis a deadly strife.
"Yield!" cry the foe, "or die!"—and they no quarter take,
But strike another down,—'tis for the country's sake.
—'Tis but a moment's fight;—the agony is past,
The colors are struck down, but not before the last
Has wound its sacred folds about his panting breast,
And on the kindred dead has laid him down to rest.

—Then shout the Vandal foe, and victory acclaim,
Then through the North, the West impunity proclaim,
Till orphan, widowed mother, maiden fair shall quail,
And maiden Modesty her magic blushes veil.
—Then through the land of Dixie beat the muffled drum,
The last defender dead, and Right is overcome!—
Where then thine arm, O Truth; and Liberty, thy God!
To shield from Vandal hordes thy first, thy chosen sod!

—Hark! hist—there is a hush, a momentary spell,
An awe—inspiring pause, unbroken by the yell,
Or cheers of charging men, or cannon's quick alarm;
—A still, and silent warning of the brooding storm.
And then low murmurs rise, the waking of the blast,
The thunder rumbles now, the sky is overcast;
Then peal the smaller arms, and mingling with the crash
Of balls, the clash of steel,—the cannon's lurid flash.
—Then louder, lightning-like, rending the darkening sky,
Once more, and high is heard the Southron battle-cry.

They come, they come, and fast,—and let the foe beware,
'Tis now the Jackson's own, his own true men they dare;—
They come like tidal wave upon the ocean's crest,
Swelling in awful aspect, mighty, unrepressed;
They come like prairie fire driven on the blast,
With roar like cataract, devouring fierce and fast;
And yell on yell—and oft repeated charge,—and yell
Again,—and down they go—and up again,—and swell
The loud huzza—huzza!—the ringing cheer,—and powers
Above be blessed, for joy! the day, the day is ours!

—Not yet, for Oh! they stop! Fear not, 'tis but for breath,
And now, on, on they press, for 'tis a race with Death.
—"Charge! and remember Jackson!"—O and then and there
Was frantic shout, and mad, and trembling with despair,
And crossing of cold steel—and gasping as for breath,

And fallen friends avenged—a death for every death.
—And there was sudden rout, and panic of the foe,
That cry a thunderbolt, the last, the telling blow;
And there was hot pursuit, redoubled haste to fly,
And then "Remember Jackson!"—terror-striking cry.

And there was close embrace, and joy, exultant thrill
Of comrades yet alive and brothers breating still;
And there was clasping close of living and of dead,
As though to life recall the kindred spirit fled;
And there were tears, hot tears upon the fallen shed,
A gray-haired sire weeps on offspring's gory bed.—
And then again, 'twas weeping, but for joy, and cheer,
On cheer that He had blessed the arms of cause so dear,
And there was rapture wild throughout the Dixie land,
And Victory once more the flame of Freedom fanned.
—Then rang the loud Hosanna—pealed the gladsome gun,
The agony was past, and Chancellorsville was won.—

Ay Chancellorsville! ill-omened name, for there,
He fell whom least his country well could spare,
Her dearest hope, her proudest boast, her pride;
Ay, Chancellorsville was won—but Jackson died.
—Drooping the colors, muffled now the drum,
With mourning all that love the South are dumb,
For ah! the Angel of the Lord has come,—
And gone.—No nobler spirit ever sped,
Or patriot soul, to join the martyred dead,
No greater Cincinnatus lived before,
No Bruce or Brutus loved his country more.—

Soldier! sleep well,—thine was no common lot;
The earth, and all it holds, before thy fame,
Shall pass away—and sooner be forgot
The last appeal of Honor, than thy name.

Virtue shall grow green blossoms o'er thy grave,
Thy memory teach the patriot to die,
Thy name shall live, and live until the brave
Of every clime,—shall know that battle-cry.

And here, among thine own, the day may be,
Yet be, when O that talismanic name,
Again may rouse the Southron to be free,
And wash away each by-gone day of shame.

—Angels shall woo thee in thy new abode,
Nay choose among them one from there above,
—Woman—to lend her sacred office here,
And hold thy name in sanctity and love.—

—What though no tinsel praise or sculptured pile,
Attest in pompous phrase thine honored part,
The silent weeping and the real sigh,
Confirm the *truer* homage of the heart!

What though no stately cenotaph exalt
Its crested forehead to the very sky,
What if forsooth no ostentatious vault,
Or mausoleum greet the vulgar eye,

Less perishable far than these—thy worth
Alone, shall prop thee high above the best,
Until the Angel of the Lord—the earth
Has swept away—when He shall call thee blest!

—And let no dastard foe exult that thou
Art gone—thy banner is no more unfurled,
For Oh! thy cause may yet be won,—and *now*,
Thy cause *is* won—*but in the other world!*

TO "GREY EYES."

Grey eyes, grey eyes, let your flame
Wander from my stricken heart,
For it may not hoping feel
All the joys those eyes impart.

Wander far, to vision lost,
Far away, beyond the sight,
Though my life should go with them,
As the sunshine with the light.

Grey eyes, cast away your charms;
—When they fix me, 'tis the death
Of my manhood and my strength,
'Tis the stifling of my breath.

'Tis the blasting of my hopes,
If they speak not to my own,
'Tis the shrouding of my soul,
If they live to live alone!

But no! not for me, ah! me,
Blindly worshiping my pride,
Should those eyes one sparkle lose,
Or that glance its lightning hide;

—Smile, fair lips, for O that smiling
Is the dawning of the day,
Blush, fair cheek, for O that blushing,
'Tis of love the maiden ray.

Throb, fair breast, for thou art young,
Young to weeping and to woes,
Bloom, thou blossom of the South,
'Tis the blooming of the rose.

Love, fair flower, as the rose-bud
Loves the kissing of the dew,
'Tis the morning of thy loving,
Morn is ever chaste and true.

—Love the hill-side, love the ocean,
All around you that is fair,
All will love you back in turn,—even
To the warblers of the air.

Love the sky, the grace of Nature,
O so kindred to thine own,
Love thy neighbor,—if he harm thee,
Love him more for that alone.

Love the dead, the weak, the noble,
Them to praise and cherish learn,
Love the fair, the pure, the faithful,
If thou wouldst be loved in turn!

For thou art all that, and more,
More than all that, yes, to me,
And if now my brain is dizzy,
Reason fails me—'tis for thee.

Love more dearly, dearly, sweetly,
Say for whom *that* love shall be,
Could I claim one spark of sympathy,
How that spark were dear to me;—

Dear to me who know not even
One, one accent of thy voice,
Yet who feel that e'en in heaven,
'Twere the Music of my choice.

—Love, and fear not, for thy bosom,
In the candor of its youth,

Is the cradle of Affection,
And the foster-child of Truth.

—Thine, the love that I would fancy,
Pure as Thought beside the grave,
Soft as ripple on the water,
Mighty—as the ocean wave;

Thine the love, so chaste, so holy,
It may fear no vulgar eye,
Thine the soul so full of pathos,
Could it not love, it would die.

—'Tis the glory of the fountain,
Where the birds hosannahs sing,
'Tis the coyness of the maiden,
In the first embrace of Spring.

'Tis the fragrance of the air,
With the orange-blossom filled,
'Tis the spirit of the prayer,
When the soul with awe is stilled.

—Girl, farewell, but not adieu, love,
Say that we must meet again,
Need I tell thee?—no, I trust not,
And I dare not—where and when.

When the vanquished sun is sinking
With the light upon its trace,
Leaving not a beam behind it,
Save the blush upon thy face;

Where the attributes of fashion,
Fade in mist, away, away,
As the glories of an Eden
Kindle in an eye of grey.

There—where we have met before,
Say that we must meet again,
If thy heart but tell thee where,
Mine must surely tell me when.

A FRAGMENT.

There is a pall upon my heart
To-night, love, and a darkness deep
About my soul, and there are tears,
More tears that I have yet to weep.
Tears now within that the icy cold
Of death hath frozen round my heart;
Not death of life, but the living death,
That draws not soul and life apart.

There's anguish that will not be known
Without; no, nor to thee, much less
To thee, whose pulse is languid and
Whose cheek grows pallid at distress.
For ah! thy heart, it was ever kind,
Nor struck, not once, an unkind blow,
And well I ween, how thine eye was wont
To quiver at another's woe.

Thank God, I had sufficient strength
To stay—as whispering to the gloom
That bore the tidings to my ear,
She yet unwilling, told my doom,

—To stay the current of my weeping,
To lock within and keep it there,
The blight she gave my earnest wooing
In answer to my burning prayer.

The conscious feeling of a wound
She may perchance have given, is
Enough to chase the roses from
Her cheeks, and mar her sense of bliss.
And I, would sooner live again
Another life, and love in vain,
Till Earth held not another hope
Save death—than give her bosom pain.

—And not a pale, weak star above
Cast in the dark sky of my night,
To hang the anchor of my hopes,
Or tell the dawning of delight!
Not one, not one, that she could promise;
Ah! from her very lips I got it;—
Shrine of the loving! that mine ear
Had heard the sentence, then forgot it.

—Then might I hope, for Hope, bright gem,
That brightest shines when all around
Is darkest, beacon of the Faith,
That Faith without you were unfound.
Without you life were not itself,
And sunbeams not of light, for they
Are promises of golden tints
That soon or late must pass away.

—But sunbeams cannot wake to life
The love that gradually is fading,
Hope cannot kindle that unborn,
Or warm the feelings dead with hoping.

Could Hope recall mine uttered doom,
Or sunbeams through my gloaming shine?
—O yes! they could, and more, were but
Those sunbeams and that hoping mine.

But gone from heaven is the ray
That might have cheered me on;—her heart
Denied me, and my hopes by her
Extinguished—such my future part.
—Come grief, come sorrow, we are one,
One now, and O forever one;
Come tears, and welcome too, since naught
That curses me, can be undone.

No pains can add to torture now,
Since all have spent their strength before;
My light is gone, and feeling, from
Excess of feeling is no more.
Ay, I am proof against all woe,
All pain of body, and all misery,
Save one—and that, so closely wound
About my heart—it is a part of me.

—Why are there dreams that cannot be,
And hearts that never can be one,
Hearts that are kindred, yet apart,
Dreams—no sooner tasted than undone.

Why are there joys, the curse of hell
Must follow ere they be assured,
Fruits, that the frosts of Love itself
Must wither ere they be matured!

'Tis that the joys of heaven, the sphere
Of bliss, lies not upon this earth,
Our bliss can but mature in heaven,
Not in the land that gave it birth.

And *there*, not purer though, than when
On earth, our thoughts first woke to sympathy,
That love, so faithful, so sublime,
Shall wreathe a halo for the Deity.*

WRITTEN ON GUARD-DUTY.

LINES TO THE NOISY FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE WEARY.

Wit is not given to all,
And there are few, very few
Who are witty—if any.
But,—
You may stick me all over with splinters,
If a fool is not damnably deep
When he's silent—and especially
—Witty, most witty—asleep.—

IMPROMPTU.

Thy charms shall never fade, for when,
The beauty of thy face, so fair,
Shall pass away, the beauty of
Thy heart—shall be reflected *there*.—

*It may not be amiss to state that in the as yet smooth current of the writer's life, there never has been a sufficient apology for the above rhapsodic vein of sentiment. The lines were indeed inspired by one, as kind as she was fair (which is saying not a little), but who, I trust, will acknowledge that the esteem in which he held her was to a lesser extent—returned;—and lesser, only because *such* esteem as her heart and worth gave rise to, he himself could not well inspire.—

TO * * * * * *

One moment, one of other days,
I fancied in my poor, poor heart,
That I might love without a hope,
And still be happy not to part
With that idea;—but the past
Is past, and cannot be again,
I knew it not, but know it now,
That love may be, and yet be vain.—

They tell me you cannot be mine;
Have you, yourself not told me so?
I told you not my love—and why!
—Forgive me, but I do not know.—
I told it to the breeze, the air,
To friends, for I had friends, and true,
You might have been another's then,
'Twere best—I told it not to you.

Why do I tell it now, yes why,
Since all your future must be dead
To me!—it grieves you, then enough;—
'Twere better had it been unsaid;
But ah! my heart was with thine own,
Breathing the same, the self-same light;
—Friendship!—to others that; my heart
For once, must be mine own to-night.

—Deem me not harsh, I would have left
It thee, content to have it rest
Beside thine own, forever glad,
Forever young, forever blest;

But ah! you love another,—I
May yet, yet love another too,
But no! it may not be, unless
That other be another you.

I never asked your love;—I would
Not now, ay, even should arise
That sympathy within your breast
Which now another well may prize.
—The flower mothered in the lap
Of ease, unused to pain or care,
And cradled by the summer breeze,
And fostered by the nursing air,

Would hang its head 'neath other skies,
And prosper ill with me alone
To nurse it, it could never brook
So rude a nature as mine own.
—Well then, adieu, a long adieu;
I may be happy, happy still,
—The good are ever happy, you,
You will be too—I know you will.

—And yet, that is too dear a page
To tear from out the volume of my heart,
One tear for yours, and one for mine,
One thought, one throbbing more, and then we part.

That page remains, but partly folded now,
Unknown anon to pain, to memory's eye,
—It is enough that I have loved you once,
I may not now;—dear girl, good-bye,—good-bye.—

The world!—what is it—but a hogshead still,
That Fashion whirls around and round at will,
The fools within from side to side are flung,
The greater spirits squeeze out—at the bung.

TO A * * * *

A FAREWELL.

Fair girl, good-bye! when morning shall have come,
And wooed thine eyelids to the light of day,
And thou shalt clasp thy lily hands in prayer,
I shall be gone—already far away,

When sunset shall have tinged thy glowing cheek
To holier light and warmer color e'en
Than it, and night hath softened both thy heart,
And mine,—a hundred miles shall be between.

I may not see thee more perhaps, nor know
Again the rapture of thy love-lit eyes,
Nor press thee for a whispered word, one word,
Of hope;—blessed dream, too fair to realize;

Nor mark again upon thy glowing cheek
The stamp of modesty but half suppressed,
Chaste glow of Virtue blushing at itself,
And Innocence in life and beauty dressed.

O say, forgive if I have marked too close
The blushes sporting on thy youthful face,
Or eager watched with quickening heart and pulse
The changing hues so often wont to chase

Each other there, for charms so rich and rare,
Like glimpses of a fond—recurring heaven,
I might have sued for, prayed for, had I dared,
Nay more—have stolen, had they not been given.

—Good-bye again, good-bye;—my native town,
Its gallant shipping, each familiar scene,

Recede.—Land of my mother, and my friends,
What though we part, O leave me not alone!

Alone! what awful sound it seems to-day;—
And yet, have I not been alone before?
—Lonely, but not alone,—I never knew
Till now, what anguish parting has in store.

I feel a tugging at my inmost core,
A heaviness about my lids, dismay—
Oppression at my heart, 'tis grief, despair,
O take me not away, I wish to stay;

Before me is the rugged path of life,
Behind me is my love, regretted, O,
And dear!—O take me back again to friends,
To home, to her!—I do not wish to go.

—Not go!—for shame! am I no more a man,
Is there no more for me a God above;
—False youth, where is thy boasted strength of soul,
Thy heart;—are there no women more to love?

—And now I see thee from the vessel's deck,
I wave my kerchief to thee, and my eyes
Are flooded with the tears I fain would check,
Till hidden is the form they idolize.—

—Farewell! I may return; and fortune, fame,
Perchance may not ignore me ere I die;
And yet, for fame, for fortune, what care I!
—Banished from thee—I care not for the sky!

—And thou art cold, ay, cold to see me leave;
Thy bosom throbs not, and thine eyes are dry,
No secret sympathy upheaves thy breast,
My dreams, my tears, unheeded, pass thee by.

Two months shall pass perhaps—another too,
Before we meet; but absence shall have wrought
Such changes in the humble pilgrim's lot,
That friends who knew him once, may know him not.

And he, that once before, however poor,
Opened his heart to many and his purse,
However fickle that, and trifling this,
May even fall from poverty to worse.

And thou, once pure, still fair, may haunt him yet,
And catch his eye amid the tripping throng,
Thy beauty, still unchanged, but O thy heart
To fashion's false emporium shall belong;

Perhaps like all the rest a wanton thing,
Without a hope, a heaven, or a thought
Of God, *now* blushing, simple, and divine,
And *then*, a "Belle"—the ruin will be wrought!—

The lover once, the *mere* admirer then,
May playful woo thy winning smiles anon,
To turn away and weep, for true, the bloom
May yet be there, the *perfume* will be gone.

Hail to the rich, warm glow that eager feasts
Upon thine own fair cheek, the very flush
Of heaven, O there's not a fairer gem
In God's own kingdom than a maiden's blush.

Preserve it maiden, let it only fade,
When time has robbed thee of thy every charm,
Nor think the world, its follies and its feasts,
Its changing fashions free from every harm.

The world! where knaves dissimulate, and fools
Redeem themselves in Beauty's partial eye,

Where Modesty must veil her face in shame,
And Innocence approaches but to die;

Society—where worth, subdued and vain,
Cannot but fall 'neath skilled and trained deceit;
—But I may judge too harshly, 'tis enough
To brand their brains as giddy as their feet.

—And what! another arm than mine, and breast
To feel—and breath! no,—not as long as youth
Shall on its pinions bear my honor up,
And boldly swear that love may yet be Truth.

—I may have gone, dear girl, and told thee naught,
Averted, O, a sigh, perhaps a tear,
But no! the stranger goes, nor starts a sob,
Returns to seek, but not to find—a cheer.

Who cares that I am sad, that thou art cold,
That life to me seems such a bitter draught;
Ah! none—and thou the least of all;—I go
With one regret, and thou hast winged the shaft.

O that my heart's own heart were thee;—that I
Had told thee that I loved thee ere I went,
For then might I have braved the world for thee,
And Fate her ills on me but vainly spent;

For O thou mayest be cold, since I am but
A stranger youth to thee, yet had I spoke
My heart's own wish, thou hadst not killed it then,
Nor turned me off to die beneath the stroke.—

—Farewell! why tarry by the way, when I
Am driven from the paradise thine own,
I leave thee to the watch of God on high,
I have not sinned, and yet I go alone.

Yet if perchance a wish, a hope, a prayer,
Inspired by the time that now is dead
Can aught avail, then is the very heaven
Of heaven itself conjured above thy head.

Oh! I shall watch thee in the calm, calm sky,
And mark thy features in the fairest cloud,
And seek the wild, wild wood to pray for thee,
And hear thy name when I shall cry aloud.

And I shall woo thee in the whispering wind,
And fancy 'tis thy voice that speaks to me,
That wind shall pass in pity on to thee,
And bear my message o'er the land and lea;

Nor spurn the message of that mystic breeze,
Thus laden with the precious load of love,
But let it mingle with the perfume of
Thy breath, to bear it on its wings above;

Or let it wander o'er thy fair, fair form,
Reveal thy bosom's treasure to my eye
Alone;—dismiss it then with me to die,
That secret in my heart alone must lie;

Or let it breathe unceasing o'er thy soul,
Fondle the ringlets of thy rippling hair,
Or fan the blossom fully into bloom,
And bid the sunbeam shine forever there.

—But say, yes say, that I shall see thee once
Again, the self-same angel thou art now,
Pure—as no other ray may hope to be,
An Eloise before the broken vow.

Unchanged, the same,—a beam, a rapture, or
A joy, a dream that waking shall mature;

And loving as the sky, and fair beyond
Aught else that's fair, and pure as naught that's pure.

—Dear girl, the rapture wanes, and I grow faint,
As separation breaks the magic spell,
Ah! let one blush, one glance, one sigh but tell,
One waving of thy hand, thine own farewell!

And bless thee now, thine eyelid quivers, weeps,—
And though the drop in pity only creeps,
—A tear for thee—for all the rest, a sigh,
For thee another tear, and then—Good bye!

TO A YOUNG LADY WHOM THE WRITER HAD PROVOKED BY AN UNKIND ACT.

Fair girl, say not there is no joy
Within that breast, no secret spring
Of bliss within thine eyes, whose looks
From heaven to my heart take wing;

No music in that voice, no symmetry
Within that form, great God—'tis blasphemy;
Why, girl, the very drooping of
Thy lash, is proof of thy divinity.

The violet has not softer hue,
Nor e'er thine own, warm sky,
The ocean has not truer blue
Than that within thine eye.

—What though the over-zealous dews
Of heaven at times may beat
Some humble petal to the ground
Beneath their awkward feet,

May not the flower lift its head
More proudly than before,
And smile upon that very sky
Whose storming is no more?

Then let me gaze on thee but once,
And close mine eyes fore'er,
Content to gaze on naught besides,
The vision were so fair.

For blindness such as that, would bring
Such rapture to my brain,
That were the very skies unveiled,
I would not see again.

TO A LADY OF NATCHEZ.

—THE LAY OF A LATER MINSTREL—
(A more authentic one.)

The way was long, the wind was cold,
The lamb was absent from the fold,
Shrill blew the blast, and black and fierce,
The gloom—the gloom grew worse and worse.
—Yet on the pilgrim went his way,
His heart alone perhaps was gay.—
And mark the lightning leaping now,
While terror gathers on his brow,
The thunder! hark—hark—O that crash,

Again, near,—near, the livid flash.
—The pilgrim paused; yet he was bold,
Nor cared for tempest or for cold;
His ardor, when his ear had heard
Some olden tale, full oft had stirred
His heart to chivalrous emprize,
Or feat where romance has its rise.
Yet now, he looked upon the sky,
Nor smiled one beacon to his eye;
Dark, dark the way—on either side,
A precipice—the blinding tide
Of waters pouring down his face,
His step uncertain, and his pace
Bewildered—triple gloom,—before,
Behind—the torrents growing roar,
—He saw not, heard not—felt no more.
—Ah! yes, he saw amid the foam,
And plunging to his final home,
A wretch, and gasping O for breath,
And struggling—writhing nay in death.
Wildly he clutches with his hand
Each twig—or strains the shifting sand;

Too late!—away—he pushes it from him,
Then sinks the hand, the arm, the palsied limb;
He spits it from him;—choking, see his face,
Blood trickling---blue—upheaved, the wild grimace.
Horror!—that shriek, the deeper groan, heart-rending key,
The living grave!—dark Death, such is the end of thee.

—The pilgrim closed his eyes, his soul
Was sick, his mind beyond control;
He prayed;—and now, as from the tomb
And visions of so dark a doom,
There sprang a form, so bright—divine,

So fair—the vision of his shrine!—
The pilgrim feared no more, the way
Was clear, the sky as bright as day.
(Had some fond fairy of the dell
In pity broke the evil spell?)
—The blast drank up the starting tear,
The waters whispered words of cheer,
His step is light, his heart restored,
'Tis Hope that points the welcome ford,
Until the haven soon is won;
—Pilgrim, thy pilgrimage is done.—

And was he well repaid, this wayward youth
For toil, and woes, and fear, and plight uncouth?
What boots it now to say, how ill—or well,
The pilgrim might—the minstrel may not tell.
Yet were there moments when the rapid swelling
Against his heart—pent up, yet e'er rebelling,
Had well nigh burst the poor, weak barrier down,
And begged one word—or braved thy ready frown;
—But ah! what boots it when the voice seems glad,
—The laughter—if the heart, the heart is sad.
Lady, forgive the bard for he is young,
The Minstrel—music is his only tongue.
—The heart—no! may not speak, it were too bold;
Forth arrant minstrel to the wind, the cold!
Go wander forth like peddling troubadour,
And beg thy pittance at some other door;
Hope! Love!—no, no, to thee they were denied,
Fair Nature, *thou* alone canst be my bride.

THE REBEL;

A CAROLINA TALE.

THE REBEL.

CANTO I.

I.

War with its blood, its horrors dire,
Its dismal notes, its wasting fire,
War, cruel war, had left its trail
Of desolation and of wail;
Still, as the mother who, at bay
Fights unto death the bird of prey
That seeks to snatch away her young,
Still helpless Carolina clung,
Against the foe almost alone,
To God, to Freedom and her own.
And what was left of thee fair clime,
What—to recall a better time?
Ay! had you been there ere the foe
Had plunged the land in wail and woe,
Ere British cruelty and wile
Had laid in waste each fertile mile,
You'd wondered where the land you'd seen
So gay, so bounteous and so green.
You'd wondered why in ruins laid
—The work of Tory renegade—
Her towns and villages were black,
Where sword and brand had left their track.

II.

And as along her stream you'd roam,
You might have wondered why each home

Was solitude itself, was lone,
Its inmates, man and brute were gone.
Why from each quarter as you went,
Rose wreaths of smoke, as recent sent
From flaming house of friend or foe
Warned others to avert the blow.
And why each traveler you met,
Met long before the sun had set,
Suspicious of your every glance,
Watched every motion you might chance,
Or recognized some mortal foe,
Or found a long-lost friend in you;—
Why brother against brother turned,
To meet in bloody battle burned,
And fathers joining in the strife
Found hatred in a son and wife.
And had you seen her ravaged soil—
Victim of plunder and of spoil,
Her Santee and her Peedee wide
With blood of Whig and Tory dyed,
You might have thought hell's demon band
Let loose upon that fated land;
Or that another "scourge of God"
Once more upon the earth had trod,
Attended by a savage horde
To devastate with spoil and sword.—

III.

Yet man will war, and warring e'er
Nor lowly nor the weak will spare;
Yet he will slay, and slaying doom
The *living* to a sadder tomb.
Not orphan's cry, not widow's prayer,
Not all the pleadings of despair,

Nor woman's tears nor maiden's can
—Affect the hardened heart of man.
Yea—he alone of all creation
Will war upon a brother nation,
He, only, of all living creatures,
Made in the likeness of God's features,
Himself more cruel far than fate,
Does his own kind annihilate.
Witness the Indian.—Hunted down,
Tracked, driven from his native town,
He flies to mountain precipices;—still,
Despite his wind and woodland skill,
The bloodhounds of civilization
Accomplish his extermination.

IV.

Once by the sea-board, bold and free,
And unconfined, save by the sea,
The untamed children of the land
Did revel on the ocean sand.—
The *white* man came. The scene is changed.
The warrior from the spot estranged,
The simple terrace which contains
His father's and his wife's remains,
Wanders away—he does not care,
Be it o'er the hill or valley—where!

V.

Shame that so vile a lot is given
King Philip and Tecumseh's children;
Shame that the proud and noble Indian
From home and country should be driven;
That rank pollution, festering vice,—
Officials bought at any price—

Men whose sole knowledge to betray,
Should on the nobler savage prey.
Yours' was the heart to do and dare
O warriors of the Delaware;
And yours' the tameless, fearless soul
Who yelled the whoop of Seminole.
Unwielded now the Tomahawk,
The hatchet of the brave Mohawk,
And hushed the notes so wont to thrill
The echoes of the swift Schuylkill.—
No more against the Gallic foe
Is backward drawn the Natchez bow,
No dark eyed maid is left to charm—
—The native graces of her form
So fit a theme for classic lore—
—The rude men of a foreign shore.
Yet stay! in spite of every ill,
Those charms, ay! they are blooming still,
Time, war, no! nothing can impair,
Natchez!—the beauty of thy fair!

VI.

And yet 'tis not alone of thee,*
But of the sex, that I would be
The champion.—Woman, in all climes
And countries,—throughout all past times,
The goddess of all valor thou,
The honor of all honor now.—
In life thou hast the noblest part,
The poet's muse, his very soul thou art;

*The Lady for whom these few lines are chiefly intended may not feel that this is the first time, the author has addressed his strain to her. He remembers that he once before lingered for a precious moment at her shrine, and though his pilgrimage might not have ended there, it may have been because some previous vows urged on the pilgrim to this very day upon his lonely way.—

Without thee vain were chivalry
And vainer still all poetry.—
A sister, thou art of the few,
To home, to brother ever true;
So kind, so sweet, so ever fair,
The dearest plant that blossoms there.
The warmth of every fireside,
By thee is ever sanctified
Its threshold, and the joy divine,
The sweetness, life of home are thine.
How prompt to wean the parent's care,
With both, their ills, their fears to share.
And O when age has grown with snow
The winter of a father's woe,
The sunshine of his nearing doom
Thou art,—the angel at his tomb.—
He need no gloom, no shadow fear
When thou, his hallowed nurse art near,
For *then* is death so well bereft
Of all its dread, that what is left
Of death, so smiling aspect wears
That bliss no holier promise bears.
And when the future with the last
Embrace, is placed besides the past
That father has no earthly boon to crave
For now to *live* were really the grave.—

VII.

But ah! when not the genial light
That sister sheds upon the night
Of fast approaching death is there,
When not a kindred heart will dare
Keep watch above the wasting form
That soon must crumble with the worm,
When want hath drawn its chillness o'er

The paltry pallet of the poor,
When ghastly plague or foul disease
Has spent its strength in all degrees
Upon the wretched waste of dust,
To all an object of disgust,
Ay, then there is another still,
Another to impart the thrill
Of promised blessings in the sphere
That knows not misery or tear:—
Another, O unvarying, pure,
A being so fitting to conjure
The kindred spirits from above
To wait upon the work of love,
That angels in their heavenly flight
Are seen to cheer the dying sight.—
For then 'tis Faith, celestial ray,
That lights to God the blessed way,
'Tis Hope, fair sister at the death,
Who when the last, the dying breath,
Is breathed, folds the cold hands to rest
In peace across the silent breast;
'Tis Charity that hovers by
To close with care the settled eye,
To win a heaven with a prayer,
And lead the pardoned sinner there.—
No dark despair or threatened wrath
Can drive thee from thy hallowed path;
And when the pangs of sickness wind
Their gloomy shroud about the mind,
When friends and kindred all have gone
And left the sick to die alone,
When thirst and hunger haunt the hearth,
The wretched home that gave them birth,
Death may not enter there before
The "Little Sister of the Poor.—

VIII.

But there are none like *thee*, O wife
To gild the ties of wedded life,
So tender, loving, O so sweet,
Sweetness itself were not complete
Without thee;—so devoted, trusting,
So ever faithful, so confiding,
So winning, graceful, sympathising,
Thy honey-moon hath not an ending.
And love, the pure, the lasting love,
—Fair flame once ravished from above,
Last relic of the Paradise
On earth, transplanted from the skies,—
Blesses the union of the hearts
Bound by its sacred bonds,—imparts
Such relish to the glowing sense,
That blending into one intense
Expansive rapture all that soul
Can reach,—desire can control,
Love by excess of loving—dies,
Revives within her pleading eyes,—
Is born again and with such fresher grace,
It glows, it vivifies in her embrace.—

IX.

Who that has never felt the warm,
Impulsive leaning of her form
Within the circling of his arm,
The chastening influence of a spouse,
—The echo of his dearest vows;—
Who that has never, never known
The blessings of a home, his own
Dear home, its gem so pure, so rare,
The virtue of a "welcome" there,

Can tell the ecstasy supreme,
The joy, as of a gladsome dream,
That life, yes life itself so vain,
So dark—can yet afford to man.
Who that has ever felt the thrill
Of joys so chaste, and feels it still,
Who that has ever shared the boon,
The gladness of love's honeymoon,
Who that has felt the genial glow
Of love's first vow, the genuine flow
Of spirits, as the glimpse of heaven,
—The pledge of sympathy is given,
When hand in hand and eye in eye,
—Blending together earth and sky,
He shares her bright, her sacred flame
Till both are one—will not exclaim,
"Yes there are moments in our lives
Which savor ay of *more* than bliss,
And times which to exchange for heaven
Itself—might almost seem amiss."—

X.

Mother!—Who that has known a mother,
Can e'er replace her by another?
Dear mother, at thy cherished name,
What voice, what heart will not acclaim.
The fond affection, love divine,
Devotion to the death are thine.
—Hungry, thy pittance is denied
To thee,—too tender to *divide*
With them who from thee have their birth,
Thou giveth *all* thou hast on earth;
—And cold, thine humble raiments spread
Their warmth upon the wretched bed
Of want.—A prey to every ill

Of nature—thou art happy still,
If though thou shakest with the chill
Of hunger and of cold, thy young
Are but content and blithe of tongue.
—It is enough for thee, and more,
More than enough, if bending o'er
The favored object of thy care,
The little one—so dear, so fair,
Its infant dreams, or wondrous freak
Seem shadowed on its smilling cheek.
Or when perchance, the sacred doze
Of innocence, the still repose
It past, the doted one awakes,
Or moves its rounded limbs, or shakes
Its arms, or wails its piteous tone,
Or seems to smile—a smile, its own,
Those tiny arms are taught to clasp
Thy bosom in an envious grasp.
Then is the infant's fancied kiss,
The aim, the sun of all thy bliss,
Then is to thee, to thee alone
The mute appeal of hunger known,
Then is the world a blank to thee
Beside the object on thy knee;
Its rapture is thine own, its tears
Are ever thine, its infant fears
Have echo in thy heart; and O
If there be danger from a foe
For him who trustingly at rest
Is cradled on thy silent breast,
Then let that hostile arm beware
To injure, touch one single hair
Of that dear object of her care,
For say, for him and in her wild despair,
For him—her own—what will not mother dare!

XI.

And when the youth to manhood grown,
Has other cares, and makes them known
To thee alone, how ever prove
Ay even then to cheer him on.—
The courage that is man's he has
It from thy very self, and as
The woes of passing years impart
Each nobler impulse to the heart,
He learns with each successive grief,
Where then most sure to find relief;
He learns thy meek advice to heed
Through life, and feels it (if indeed
A blessing in that life there be),
How much of *that* belongs to thee.
—The mother is not satisfied
That she has suffered—all but died
To give us life, but she must still
Be near, and near us to fulfill
Her bitter part; near us in woe,
In sorrow; when the cruel blow
Of fate has laid some kindred low,
With us to grieve—so that her task on earth
Is never ended—'tis a constant birth !—

XII.

Accursed be the man fore'er
Who would not heed a mother's prayer,
Who, when the mother on her knees
Before him, turns her tearful eyes
To his, and clasps her pleading hands,
Would still be deaf to her demands.
There is no holier, prouder boast
Of manhood, than to give the most

Of labors pittance to the old,
Yet genial spirit of the fold,
His aged mother.—There is naught
So touching in the realm of thought
As then her least desire to meet,
And safely guide her tottering feet.—
Cornelia, thou wert Rome's;—and she
Might well exalt her pedigree
Above the clouds,—for thou O blest
Among thy sex, of mother's best
Example, thine it was and is,
And will be till the end of this
Creation,—from thy sphere above
To teach the matron how to love.—
The hero who would fain be dead
Than love the land where cravens tread,
The warrior who but craves to die
Where Freedom lifts her battle-cry,
He too may gain that strength of soul,
That flame, impatient of control,
That heart to dare the tyrant's rod
From one, a woman, yet a God,
May worship on his bended knees
The mother of the Maccabees.—

XIII.

Sweetheart!—thou heart of mine be still,
Hush, stay thy eager throbbings, thrill
Me not again, so deep, so keen,
For none may tell what lies within.—
Thou wert not ever constant, still,
Still thou wert truthful, and if ill
Be said of thine inconstancy,
Twas not, not infidelity.
The woman thou wouldst love is not

Of Earth;—she may not be begot
Below; and thou hast been too true
To *that* one, not to bid adieu,
To *that* love which is there enshrined,
Devotion, one, entire, blind.—
And yet as thou hast loved before,
Thou lovest now, but ten times more;
With love on love heaped up together,
So closely clasped, they may not sever.
—My life were not a life apart
From thee, mine own, my sweet sweetheart.
Do I not live upon thy love?
Is there a star in skies above
That does not shed a brighter light
To woo the soft embrace of night,
Or twinkles not some moment there
To cheer some poet lover's prayer;
Is there a sail upon the seas
That does not hail some dearer breeze,
Some breeze more welcome than the rest
Lingering back to be caressed;
Is there a sweetness on this earth
That owes not love its very birth?
No, there is not, and if there be,
There is no God for Love is He,
Eternal with Himself, and He is all,
Yes all—but sin, but hatred,—but the Fall!

XIV.

Ginevra!* thy tale is a sigh—
To live, to love, and then to die,
So young, so loved, the pride of life,

*The reader will doubtless recollect her touching story as so eloquently related by Rogers, in his "Italy."

A rose, a maiden, then a wife,
And then a corpse.—Death thou art mean,
The foul thing that on obscene
Disease and crime disgraceful creeps,
When whether maid or lover weeps,
The chosen lamb thou strikest down,
The noblest jewel in the crown.
And when hadst thou a heart to spare
The weak, the fearful, or the fair?
But Life the noblest vengeance yet hast thou,
And Death thy triumph's past—for her's is now.

XV.

Thine annals know none like to these,
Thine Abelard, thine Eloise,
O Love. They may have sinned, if sinning
Is constancy; but O forgiving,
It must be easy for such loving.
The sympathy of souls so tender
Some stronger feeling must engender,
The aspirations of a soul
Aspiring to the same high goal
With one as fair, as great, as pure,
Is more than Virtue might endure.
The yearning for the better bliss
That is of others, not of this
Vile earth, a very saint might cause
Amid his holy raptures pause,
And for *that* hope forgetting all,
To look, to totter, then to fall.
And let no heartless cynic dare
To rashly curse that gifted pair,
For with their grace reflected back, yes who,
Who that is mortal had not fallen too!

XVI.

So like each other they, you might
Have sworn they saw the self-same light
Together, that the tropic sky
Held not too stars so fit, so nigh
In brightness,—that a common stem
Upon one bough united them;
Their common end so absolute,
This one a blossom—that a fruit.—
Like every flower that perfumes,
Alas like every bud that blooms,
Fruits, blossoms all that with us dwell,
They bloomed, they ripened—and they fell.—
O pity them, but curse them not
For they were young and not begot
For earth:—two angels on their way
To home, to heaven, led astray.—
They must have suffered from that fall;
They did—it was a cruel pall
Upon their love,—a stern rebuff;
They suffered—well, that is enough.—
And blame them not, for they were true,
Were faithful to the last adieu,
And then, so bright a mark for hell,
No wonder they from weakness fell.
Too delicate for earth, they spent
Their strength, and faded ere they went;
Too tender for a foreign sphere,
Guilty, they shed no felon's tear,
Thus, in their very falling lies
Their better fitness for the skies.

XVII.

Thine influence Love is not to-day

Alone, but in the past, away,
Back in the spring time of the past,
Where'er tradition lived. Thou hast
Thy part in the affairs of men,
Potential now,—potential then,
Thy love in peace, heroes in war,
Thine Achilles, thy Lockinvar.
Thy Lockinvar, bold, brave and true,
And dauntless as the blade he drew,
Whose clansmen numbered but a few,
Yet who had dared, ay, had he none,
To *have* the maiden he had won.—
—Faint heart is her's who would not be
His own because she fails to see
The glitter of a jewel o'er
His manly form—for he is poor.—
But ah! is he not good and true,
And young—that is enough to woo,
Is he not strong, and brave within,
And fair—that is enough to win.—
Maidens whose hearts are pure, beware,
Beware of fashion and of glare,
True love is ever wanting there,
True manhood cares not what you wear.
Spurn from your side the fawning fool
Whose only thought to ridicule,
And shame the sycophant so prone
To blast your love, nor give his own;
Be women, matrons when you can,
Be men yourselves and make us men,
Be true like Katharine Janfarie,
Be Lockinvar's—none other's be!

XVIII.

Penelope! would there were more

Like thee, fond wife, whose native shore,
For months of hoping, and for years
Of waiting, bathed by thy tears
Alike and by the briny seas,
Restored at length thy Ulysses,—
To find within thy circling arms
The same, fond, faithful, constant charms.
Live on, brave woman in the breast
Of many more like thee; and lest
Another should forget that thou
Wert loyal to thy marriage vow,
Reach from thy lofty sphere to this
One flavor of thy magic kiss,
For that imparted to the lip
But once, would in that ardent sip,
Hold fast together ne'er to be undone
For years and years, two hearts, two lips as one.

XIX.

What flame, thou youth of Abydos,
Led thee the Hellespont to cross,
What beacon urged thee o'er the main,
So weak, yet urged thee on again,
To breast the billows and the tide,
And winds that with each other vied
To slay thee, still unterrified!
Ah! ask it not,—those billows best
May tell, since now he lies at rest
Beneath their brine:—they know too well
For whom that heart was want to swell
In manly pride; they heard his prayer
And saw him struggle with despair,
The last, supreme, the manly strife
For her, yes more for her than life;
Nor lent one arm outstretched to save

Him ere he sank beneath the wave.—
—One night, alas, the beacon light
As ever met the lover's sight.—
Cross not fair youth—for danger's there,
And Death lies lurking in the air.
But what is danger to the eye
That plucks its courage from on high,
And what is dying to the heart
That is from maiden love apart,
But whetting to the edge of steel,
Its latent virtues to reveal,
But fanning to the living flame
That sinks, but rises still the same,
And warmer then, till burning more and more,
Consumes what it had vivified before.

XX.

Leander leaps into the waves,
And now their fury boldly braves,
—The winds would fain avert his fate,
Turn back, it may not be too late;
The beacon brighter burns, and where
It flashes, she awaits him there.
On, on,—and triple strength of arm
That beam imparts to face the storm.
But ere the goal is reached, O see!
He sinks,—he drowns,—O can it be?
No, there again upon the spray,
The top-most spray, he fights his way.
—O stay thy horrors for a time,
Thou sea,—and with so deep a crime
Stain not alas, thy bosom blue,
For thou art soft at times and true.
But ah! 'tis vain, no *kindly* ear
Is lent his agony to hear,

His frantic cry above the sea
Is heard,—from land or lea
There comes one echo back again,
—The tempest howling o'er the main.
No hand is stretched to grasp his own,
Cold, heavy, pale as Paphian stone.—
O God, he sinks! he may not stir
Again;—his last thought is of her.
—The waves have washed his body now
Against the rocky shore, where thou,
Hero, true minister of love,
Thou tremblest on the watch above.—
—How she has watched the growing gale,
And joined her weeping to its wail,
And cried, and prayed, and cried once more,
His name yet louder than before.
And she had hoped against despair,
And torn the flowers from her hair
That with each night were wont to deck
The glossy charms, the soft, warm neck,
The softness none save he might tell,
The brow Leander loved so well;
And bared and beat that peerless breast
So often, yet so fondly pressed
To his,—and agonizing cried
"Leander!"—till the threatening tide
Had sent the spray above the rocks
To deck anew her flowing locks.—
"Leander!"—no reply has come;
She listens,—but his lips are dumb.
And she has wept until the storm
Unheeded sweeps about her form,
Yet cannot dash the flood away
That rolls from out her eyes of gray;
—Gray eyes, the true, the constant eye,

Two planets stolen from the sky ;—
Nor dry the rills that freely flow
In anguish on her cheek of snow,
The lids that drooping with their freight
Of tears,—now sink beneath their weight,
Until the clouded eye with moisture dim
Soon lives again to watch for him—for him.

XXI.

And she has waited till the tear
That added agony to fear,
Has ceased to flow ;—its source is dry,
And now she prays to die,—to die.
But lo! upturned to hers, his face,
His manly features she may trace,
But with the smile upon his breath
That man alone may wear in death.
O loveliest of youths was he,
As form and feature well may be,
And fairest then for on his face
He wore the loveliness of grace.
For Death whilst robbing him of life,
Itself had fallen in the strife,
And left him that upon his lip,
The genial smile it could not strip
Him of,—and in his placid eye
That witness of a time gone by,
That searching look, the veritable trace
Of life, that lingers still upon the face

XXII.

When all is dead but that.—The dead
Seem sleeping, and if life is fled
From out the eye, the *soul* is ne'er

No never wholly wanting there!—
Hero has marked in torture now
The paleness on his moistened brow;
One look has been enough to tell
Why she had loved so true, so well,
How she may never love him more
Now lifeless on that cruel shore.
One thought has been enough to fill
Her bosom's feeling with the chill
Of blasted hopes;—she may not live
Without him who alone might give
Her bliss;—and now the welcome wave
Becomes of both the common grave,
Has heard their last, the common prayer,—
The one for him, the one for her,
Has parted them at first, but to befriend
And join them fast together in the end.

XXIII.

Year after year the ocean sand,
The bulwark of their native land,
Has piled its tribute o'er the drowned
Into a monumental mound;
The ocean's plaintive tones expiring,
Then on each surge as often rising,
Have sung their requiem to the sky
And mourned for them it caused to die.
In garlands of the ocean foam
Is chastely decked their better home;
Their dirge is echoed in each heart
Where woman fills the larger part;
Leander he is pitied most and much,
For ay there had been many such
As brave as he for her;—too fair
To lose was she,—too true, too rare.—

—Ah! *that* is love, true love,—the rest
Is but the hollow sham; at best,
The dressing up in thin disguise
Of feeling in a garb of lies.
The genuine sympathy of soul
Should know no counsel, no control,
Save honor, that alone should rule.
True loving needs no other school
Than truth;—and happiest is he
Who well may feel that if he be
Beloved, 'tis with that almost unknown,
Rare, deep devotion, 'tis for him alone.

XXIV.

—Not for the ancient pedigree
That he may boast, deep rooted tree,
Adorned by nobler fruits than he
May bring, and propped by nobler fame
Perchance than he may ever claim,
The tree that reared at such a price
May not endure his weight of vice;
—Not for the wealth that he may owe
Another, or that he by low,
Vile measures may perchance have won,
Content if sly, the fraud is done,
—Nor even for th' ancestral host
That he may honorably boast,
Nor for the lucre in his purse
That often is a fatal curse
Though well acquired,—but for more,
For him alone, however poor,
However Fortune may have shed
Or spared her favors o'er his head.—
—Ah! Woman, thine th' eternal flame.
Yes, thou art fair, yet much to blame

At times;—and thou the noblest thing
That bard may praise, or poet sing,
The dearest imperfection God
Has left upon this sinful sod,
The only object that is worth
The living for upon this earth
Where wealth is oft an imp of hell
Bent on its mission false and fell,
Where merit, courage, birth and brain,
And all without thee, *all* were vain,
Thou too must fall at times, and O
How often fall, and then how low.—
Ah miserable man, 'tis thine
The fault for thou art less divine
Than she, and just as weak; since she
It was, a woman, made thee free.
Base man, vain man, with all thy pelf
Say what art thou beside herself,
Ay vulgar, coarser than before.
Stoop to her greatness and deplore
Thy baseness, 'tis thy only boast:—
And yet 'tis woman loves us most.
—Woman in every shape and sphere
And country,—thou art, thou art dear.
Thou mayest be cruel, frail and vain,
Nay false, deceitful and profane,
Vain of thy charms, thy wide control,
False to the trusting lover's soul,
Cruel, because he loves too well,
And false because thou art a hell,
A curse to mortals and to men,
Yet thou art dear, for even then
Dear creature with thy every ill,
O thou art Woman, WOMAN *still!*

CANTO II.

THE CAMP.

I.

It was the dead of night, the time
And hour that best befit a crime,
When lovers part in joy or sorrow
To meet again upon the morrow,
Or meet, embrace perhaps no more, for who
May tell what is good-night, and what adieu

II.

Forever;—none save God alone;—
And better were it never known
That kiss which is to be the last,
That look to be forever past;
For then were parting robbed of all
Its pain, its bitterness and gall,
The last adieu were never told
With those pulsations that unfold
The secrets of the heart and tell
It must be—'tis the last farewell.
For then were mother spared the pall
Upon her feelings that is all
But death to her; then absence might
Be long, and yet afford delight
At knowing that to meet again
Were more than equal to the pain
It gave.—The soldier may aspire
To meritorious death, and higher,
To fame, undying fame, and yet,

Although too faithful to forget
The maid that he has won before,
He may not hope to see her more;
He may not hope that when the war
Is past, the honorable scar
He bears, distinction purchased at the price
Of beauty, may augment her love to thrice
Its former fondness, life is not his own,
—Nor her's—it is his country's—her's alone.
—So thought GLENBURNYME, 'tis our hero's name,
A goodly one we trust, and yet we claim
No other worth for him save heart and head
Enough to feel, the tried ones that he led

III.

Had followed him by field and flood,
And for him freely shed their blood;
—Save that his heart, both young and warm,
Was pure, as little apt to harm,
As maiden's when the touch of spring
Has played upon its softest string;
Save that his mind, oft wont to dwell
On holier things than light, might well
Have honored one of greater age,
And served to ornament a sage.
And yet he loved illusions, dreams,
Adventures bold, romantic schemes,
He yearned, though gentle and refined,
For dangers, love and war combined.
—And he had loved; ay, even now,
The breeze that chafed his manly brow,
Seemed on its golden wings to bear
The promise of some maiden fair.—
And yet 'twas not a blonde, or dark
Deep eye alone had caused the spark

Of love to kindle in his breast,
So often and so strangely blest;
He cared not that her eyes were blue,
Or black, as long as they were true,
Or that her smiles to every taste
Were not the best—if they were chaste.
The graces of the shape, the eye
Both gray and hazel—of whatever dye,
If it were soft at times, and then
Flashed up,—to soften down again,
All he had often cherished, nay
He had forever loved, they say.
—For Nature has decreed, and who
Can say that that decree is too
Severe, that all some passing flame must own,
And none may ever live for self alone.—

IV.

—And now that honor, duty, war
Had banished him in exile, far
From those he best might love, to roam
Mid dangers, day and night, his home
Had often passed before his mind
With all its pleasures left behind;—
His heart had missed perchance some fair,
Dear friend,—we may not enter there
As yet,—suffice that it was free
As loyal, pure, as heart can be.—
He was a soldier, proudest name
That youth may bear, and if the fame
Of others had eclipsed his own,
His deeds were doomed to be unknown
To them or to his country's lore,
He felt that none might love her more

Than he; he fought for that alone, 'twas all
He sought, for her to conquer or to fall!

V.

And now 'twas nigh the morning light,
The darkest hour of the night,
The band slept on, (blessed sleep), save two,
Our hero and the sentry true
That watched;—and pillowed every head
Upon the turf,—the warrior's bed
His country's bosom,—clay to clay
Oblivious of their fate they lay.
Glenburnyme watched their grateful rest,
The silent heaving of each breast,
And fancied some there were whose dreams
Were not unlike his own fond schemes.—
A few had felt a gentler sphere,
And known some home of yore, as dear
As his,—and war had leveled all,
Yet made them nobler for the fall.
Duty had called them forth, and fame
Perchance had swelled each weaker frame
To manhood, none were youthful then
Their country's need had made them men.
The rest, two score or so were rough
Yet brave and manly,—'twas enough
For him to hold them quite as dear;
They might have known much less of fear
Than he himself, they cared not when and why
They fell, with him they were prepared to die.

VI.

Like theirs Glenburnyme's manly form
Was one of steel, his weighty arm
Had well-nigh felled the sturdy oak

With one swing of his sabre-stroke.
Swift as the swiftest of the foe
And supple as the pliant bow,
Was he;—the graces of the form
Were his, that strike at once and charm.—
What if the smoke of battle and
The sunshine of his sunny land,
Had burned his cheek to darker dye
Than well might brook a foolish eye;
What if his brow were dark, and care
Had chiselled deeper furrows there,
Than beauty might commend, or youth
Might justify, there was forsooth
Beneath his eyelids that which told
What lay within the heart of gold,
His looks betrayed that it was warm and young,
They might have pleaded better than his tongue.

VII.

And yet he was not over fair,
Though manly, firm, beyond compare,
His face was frank, with candor beamed,
He *was* exactly what he seemed.—
—Glenburnyme rose, then stepping o'er
The heads that he had scanned before,
He stopped beside the slender frame
Of one, his nearest friend, by name
De Mar.—De Mar was but a boy
In size and years, as gentle, coy,
As maiden, born among the poor,
And little fitted to endure
Fatigue; yet he was true and staid
And loyal as his chieftain's blade,
And brave, e'er ready to engage,

—For courage is of every age.—
—The captain bent in silence o'er
The features of the youth, that wore
In grateful sleep the placid mien
Of hope and innocence serene.
And he might well dislike to chase
The dream that flitted o'er his face,
For to awake him were to mar
Perchance the only joy of war.
De Mar had ever been too poor
To know what riches may procure,
He spurned the arrogance of pelf
That knows no other aim but self,
And liked it but for one,—another
Beloved beyond aught else, his mother.
She too was poor, and yet of old
Had known a better time; the cold,
Cold world had turned its shoulder now
Upon her, though her bridal vow
She had forever kept, and though
She had but chosen to bestow
Her whole affection on a son,
De Mar, her child, her only one.
—The world cares not for that, true worth
And merit cannot find on earth
Their due reward;—she knew from whom and whence
And where, she might expect her recompense.

VIII.

She doted on her child, and yet,
Had seen him leave without regret,
It was his fondest wish to wield
His weapon on the battle-field
Of freedom;—he might die,—what then?
Would he not die as better men

Had died;—she was a mother, true,
And loved him, loved him, O, as few
Can love, yet Spartan mother she,
"Go"—had she cried—"and *strike* for me."
She felt his country's claim alone
Might even pass before her own.
—De Mar had gone, had learned to hear
Unflinchingly the bullet steer
Its deadly course beside his ear,
Coolly to face the coming foe,
In streams had seen the life blood flow;
Nay he had mingled in the strife,
As though he little cared for life;
With but a dozen at his back
Had reckless led the fierce attack
With all the ardor of the South
Into the very cannon's mouth.
In fine, it seemed as though he fought
To die, 'twas death alone he sought.
He was a boy in years, a youth
All honor, candor, love and truth,
The age of hope, so pure, so free from lust,
When Beauty is an idol—*all* is trust.

IX.

He was a picture, ay, of hope,
But Hope that can no longer cope
With fortune, bent beneath its stroke,
The goddess with her anchor broke.
—A bitter smile that flitted o'er
His face, habitually he wore,
At times akin to dark despair
The trace of tears seemed gathered there.
—And what had withered in his breast

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The aspirations high that best
Become the young,—what bitter shaft
Had rankled in his flesh, to waft
Its inmost gall about the whole
And fester in his ardent soul?
'Twas love,—a woman—fair as naught below,
The only woman, he had cared to know.

X.

Yet she, fond maid, had ever turned
Away his love,—had ever spurned
His passion—'till the youth had raved,
And cried, and fretted, then had craved
No other boon except to wear
Her image in his heart for e'er.
Yet she was ever kind, had seen
What fatal curse her cruel mien
Might bring upon his after life;
—Yet could she ever be his wife?
Ah, had she loved him, then indeed
Had she been his, in spite of need,
However little his renown,
Or poverty had crushed him down,—
For she was of that glorious kind,
So precious, yet so rare to find,
That know but once love's deep emotion,
And then, 'tis worship, 'tis devotion.
Still ever kind to him was she,
As kind as sister well may be,
She felt his worth, sufficient to deplore
His love,—and she esteemed it,—but no more,
A friend—a brother even she might call
Him, ay, she dearly liked him,—that was all.

XI.

And when of war the first alarms
Had pealed in fright—"to arms, to arms."
De Mar had pleaded once again,
Implored one promise; but in vain.
—Yet he had told them all good-bye
With but a quiver in his eye,
—He had not wept—his broken heart
Had told him it were best to part
From *all*,—he looked to Heaven now
Alone, to heed his fondest vow;
Her love was to his soul so nigh,
Without her he had rather die,
He was resolved upon his future doom,
Yet swore to bear her image to the tomb.

XII.

Glenburnyme knew full well, forsooth,
The short, sad story of the youth,
Whose wont it was to trust him, nay
Had told his chief its mournful lay.
—The captain gazed upon his face
In silence, thinking he might trace
Within it lines the noble test
Of gentler blood than he professed.
De Mar had smiled in sleep, he dreamed
Perchance of home, of joys that beamed
Upon him from some realm above,
To crown his wishes with her love.
Perchance he dreamed some kindly sprite,
Or fairy in effulgent light—
Upon his fortune favored head
Her charms and choicest gifts had spread,
That glory on his forehead blest

Might in the brighter future rest,
Or shining fame might yet attain
The love that *he* had failed to gain;—
If so why banish from his lip
The grateful chalice of his sleep?
Such are the dreams of youth, and sad
Their fate who would efface its glad
Fond hopings—happy they who from the wreck may save,
Their fond, their best illusions to the very grave.

XIII.

Perhaps the chief in pity's sake
Had strayed some other dream to break,
Or watched himself till peep of day
Had chased their slumbering breath away,
Had not De Mar with fitful sigh
Half opened his reluctant eye;
—'Tis ever thus, the fondest dreaming
Is alway nearest to the waking.
"Up," cried the chief, "the morn is well
Nigh come at last, yet none may tell
What the last hour may bring: see that
The guard is changed, and wake me at
The first approach of danger, for
Be it that long waking, or
Fatigue has turned my dizzy brain,
Or but a foolish fear that fain
Must vanish with approaching day,
I fear that ere the morning ray,
The foe may be upon us;—keep
Thy vigils strictly while I sleep."—
The captain turned away, nor stayed
To see his orders were obeyed,

He trusted; trust blind trust is seldom met;
Thank God, *some* may be blindly trusted yet.

XIV.

But they are few.—The stolid rock
That may withstand the torrents shock,
The orb of night whose placid eye
Serenely watches o'er the sky,
Each in his sphere, sometimes unseen,
As clouds or passions intervene,
Must stand above the rest at last,
And sanctity is of the past
No more than of the present.—Gain
Is universal, gold doth reign
Supreme!—Thou liest follower of vice!
Thank Heaven;—there yet are men who have no price.

XV.

De Mar had placed the guard anew,
And now the hazy morning threw
Its first, pale misty glimmer round
The sky, and o'er the dewy ground;
When listening with attentive ear
He starts! but ah!—'tis not with fear.
Then bends him to the earth, and then
Consults the guard to list again,
Then whispers to him now, "methought
I heard the English, but 'tis naught."
The moments fly, till through the wood
Is heard to where the sentry stood,
Yet faintly as the morning breeze
That wakes the summit of the trees,
—The tramp of horses.—'Tis the foe,

The foe! yet none has moved, till low
Upon the ear, yet shrill is heard
The hooting of the midnight bird.
Hoot, hoot,—and now from every side
The signal; *hoot, hoot* is replied;
Then up each man, nor last their gallant chief
And whispers his commands, distinct and brief.—

XVI.

Glenburnyme, moving mid the crew,
Recalled in phrases fit and few
Their prowess in the past, and told
How they must conquer as of old.
Now hearken to their battle-cry
"Marion!—we can no more than die."
Softly they glide from tree to tree
That prying foe may hear or see
No symptom of their coming, till
The captain bids them halt;—then still
As Indian, or avenging ghost
Each hies him to his given post.
Meantime the British come,—a proud
Bright host, with clang of sword, and cloud
Of dust,—to mingle with it soon—before, behind;
They rush upon their death confidingly and blind.

XVII.

Bravely they press their steeds along
The beaten road—a hundred strong;
They come,—one moment more, and death
Will hang upon our hero's breath.—
Glenburnyme watched with wary eye
Their coming, not without a sigh.—
He might have led the charge, he might

Have eager stormed the bristling height
With ardor, smiled above the dead,
And cheered until the foe had fled,
But now that gallant corps to fell,
Himself to sound their fatal knell,
Without a warning take their life,
As sheep beneath the butcher's knife,
Were cruel;—pity stirred *his* breast,
So often fired with the zest
Of carnage oft before;—and still
He prayed that it may not be ill
Since it was war,—yet might have spared
Had God not otherwise declared.
—War may not always be a curse,
And peace may be a crime far worse
Than felon's;—love of country knows
No blacker felons that its foes.
Accursed he who strikes at war,
The struggles of the brave would mar,
Would stifle in the patriot breast
His flame,—the holiest and the best,
No! Freedom's sacred fight must ever be;
'Tis now and 'tis forever; Liberty
Still lives, and living should, it *must* be free.

XVIII.

And should Oppression's tool but reign
Above the craven of the plain,
Should Liberty in mortal pain
Take wing to higher haunts again,
The rustic home, the mountain air,
The peak, shall be its home fore'er;
There shall it make its rugged nest
And feed the hero from its breast.

The war-cry of a William Tell
From other hallowed heights as well
May peal;—the Pyrenees may rear
Above some later Roland's bier
Its monumental mounds, and more,—
Some Cid may rise as once before
With magic blade to chase again
Th' intruder form the soil of Spain;
The cliff, the highland loch may glow,
The crag,—avenger of thy woe
Fair Freedom,—with the fiery cross,
Nor weeping, sorrow for the loss
Of Bruce, for from thy classic skies,
And legends, there may yet arise
O Scotland in thy burning thirst
For fame, and mightier than the first,
A Wallace;—angel of the war,
A Woman;—she! an Ellen Mar.
O Caledonia! land for me,
Fair clime!—for *thou* wert ever free.
Asleep!—fair science blessed thy dream,
And poet bard with art supreme
Has joined thy virtues to his name,
And sent them both to lasting fame;
Has touched them with his magic bow,
The vale, the rock, the hill, the flow,
Till they at length electrified
Had taken up the strain and cried
When he had wept, and wept again
When he had touched a softer strain.
Familiar now the Border war,
The cliffs, the lake of Uumvar,
The Southron and the Highland strife;
—'Tis he has waked them all to life,
He, Orpheus, but a nobler one.

—Proud mother of so rare a son,
'Twas thine, before it might expire,
To catch the echoes of his lyre!
—Scotland, thy glory is thy Scott;
Great minstrel;—*I* may praise thee not.
—Brave land! Asleep, thy blessed vision
Is the divine of all creation.—
Awake! then tremble in thy wrath,
O Tyranny! for in thy path,
Like threatening ghost shall ever stand
The valor of that loyal land,
—To blast thy cowardice and thee,
—The Spirit God of Liberty.
—And O in other lands as well,
The Rock shall be thy Citadel;
And should the vile abuse of force
Oppress our home, the very source
Of Freedom,—then defiant still
The very dead of Bunker Hill,
That chased the Lion to its lair,
And traced in deafening thunder there,
No more—the limit of its sway,
May honor yet the light of day,
And cry, "to arms!"—and manlier then,
Than now, inspire more of men
Than "Beasts."—What though degenerate times,
Drunk with the maelstrom, ay, of crimes,
Have gazed upon it and stood by,
Unpitying seen a nation die,
Have seen its pleadings and its woes,
Its wail—to death, when it arose,
Its weakness drawn from victory,
Its struggles and its agony,
And lifted not a hand to stay,
And not a voice to turn away

Its fate; what though for Freedom's cause,
And God's, and man's, and Nature's laws,
A brother man hath staked his own,
His all, unaided and alone,
Hath fought, and beaten down, yet fraught
With holy ecstasy, hath fought—
Again, till paralysed at length
His arm, and dead his sacred strength,
What though a Jackson, Lee have fought,
And bled and died, yet all for naught;
Truth, thou art still a Truth, and One
On high may see thee not undone,
Untamed, triumphant, righted—till
Thy sons may brook no further ill.
And they whose memory but now
Had torn thine agonizing brow,
They too shall feel with thee at rest
To know their grateful work is blest,
For theirs' no useless Holocaust,—
Though fallen, they had never lost.—
—And though triumphant in its might,
Oppression still may stifle Right,
Though patriot soul be made to hush
Within itself its hallowed gush,
Praise be to God,—still may arise,
Like Meteor in the Southern skies,
That flashing of the magic steel,
The cherished, yet the last appeal
Of manhood;—that, the loftiness
Of Right, that chains may not repress.
Shades of Sobieski, Washington, and Lee,
Be up again, your struggles yet may be,
Shades of a Stonewall Jackson, O forget
That there are *slaves*, there may be *Freemen* yet!

CANTO III.

THE PURSUIT.

I.

Muse of the humbler poet now,
These lines with fitter thoughts endow,
For he that fain would sing of fame
And Liberty, might bring to shame
Th' unequal craving of his aim;
But if instead of higher theme,
Throughout the spirit of his dream,
Some humbler virtue thou but lend,
Thy mission will be at an end.
The nestling that would fain take wing
Too soon, ere it has ceased to cling
To the maternal breast, must fall;
—Kind Muse,—I may not soar at all.
Support me in my maiden flight, for I
As yet, unaided, may not even fly.

II.

"Fire!"—and through the forest glade,
And from the deadly ambuscade,
Went forth the pealing of the gun
That told it was the last, last sun
They saw to many; yet at bay,
The stag disabled in the fray
Is still a fear, they who a life
Retain, await—the closer strife.
It came,—and flashed the Southron blade
Of Tory and of Whig, and laid

Low, low upon the trampled dust
Both foe and friend. The bayonet thrust
Mid maddening shout; the fierce recoil,
The fatal plunge, the bloody soil,
The groan of wounded and of dying,
Unheeded, cursed, yet often rising
In agony the battle o'er,
Are there;—"Water," but clotted gore
Instead is freely drank. But O
More grateful sight, the stricken foe
Retire;—*then* is the fierce pursuit;
The steed beholds the new recruit
Ascend its side,—for he that led
It erst in march or charge—is dead.
Two score or so they speed away
Upon the hostile tracks to slay,
Or capture.—"On!" Glenburnyme cries,
And on it is; the roadside flies
Behind them, and the chieftain's blade
Unsheathed—cheers the cavalcade.
Close on behind him came de Mar,
He too unmarked by recent scar,
Though frequent stains his steel upon
Told where the bloody blade had gone.
Eager now, faster now,
Over hill, over brae,
Up they go, down they go
In the distance away.
Quick is the flight, but quicker though
And mad do the pursuers go,
Till Southron shout and louder cheer,
And yell, fall on the British ear.
Then press on, press on both again
For death impelled the hindmost then;
"On," cries the British leader, "on"

Our haven now is well nigh won
"For *there*, the heights of Darlington."
And lo, fast growing on the sight
And nearer as they speed with might
And main—appears the welcome town.
Glenburnyme sees, and with a frown
Of anger on his clouded brow,
His prowess may be baffled now;
For once within the grateful wall
Of Darlington, and at their call
Might issue forth a British throng
Of foemen thrice again as strong.
"One struggle more," he cries, it may
"Not be too late to win the day."
Urged on once more the Southron band
Speed on, nor wait to hear command
So welcome to their hearts again,
But ply the spur with might and main.
And lo! a hundred yards are past,
And now they near the foemen fast;
Already with a fatal thrust
The hindmost bite the trampled dust,
The Southrons are upon their prey,
The British stand again at bay;—
At bay, but with an equal strength
They turn upon their foe at length;
—Steel clashes upon steel, but high
Above rings out the Southron cry.
"Strike deep, my gallant men, for God
"And Carolina, mother sod."
Glenburnyme cries, then strikes;—'tis he
That leads for God and Liberty,
Receives a dozen thrusts and parries all,
Fells all before him in a fatal fall.—

III.

'Tis hand to hand, the angry oath
That rises on the lips of both
The fallen and the live, is heard,
And often is their dying word.
O listen to the vain appeals
For mercy;—*there*, pierced through, he reels,
—Turns pale, then drops his sword and rein,
And lifeless sinks upon the plain;
Perhaps he rises on his knee,
He crawls, he seeks in vain to flee;—
—Worse fate than that of senseless brute,
The horse have trod him under foot.
Here writhes a crippled wretch again
In agony and mortal pain,
There lies the tearful steed of war,
And wails,—more agonising far
Than human cry,—poor beast, for O
To thee denied the fatal blow.
'Tis man to man and brother killing brother,
He sobs "my wife,"—and he "my poor fond mother."

IV.

But ah! and now sublimer fate
Than all the honors of the great,
The humble native of the land
Raises to God his fainting hand,
With rapture in his softening eye,
He sinks; 'tis thus that patriots die.
He sobs not, weeps not, then and there,
But lifts his consecrated prayer
To Him;—and martyr to the cause
He fancies in the gay applause
Of spirits of another sphere,
He hears, he feels the blest appear.

Close to his weak, yet panting breast
The sword hilt cross is firmly pressed.
He strains it with a lingering kiss,
And dies with ecstasy of bliss.
O who that loves his country and the breath
Of freemen,—would not die the patriot's death.

V.

'Tis there, upon the battle field
Of Freedom that the soul may yield
To earth, to man its mortal coil
And sanctify its native soil.
—O battle-fields of Freedom, ground,
Forever dear, where heroes found
A grave, and brothers too; O ye,
Ye altars of our Liberty,
Where kneeling spirits daily raise
Their voice to God in love and praise,
Thrice hallowed ground, where Truth has fled
To spring forth from among the dead,
Defiant, brighter than before,
Till arrant falsehood be no more,
Rekindle in my humble breast
The Faith that fain would be repressed
Fore'er;—and say to them that rest
In peace among the blest and best,
We have forgiven, but forgot, No, No!
That length of treachery we may not go.

VI.

Say to them, yes, there may be might
Enough to see them yet aright,
And love enough for God and men
To see them yet avenged. And then

But then alone, when Freedom's voice,
And Truth's, harmonious may rejoice,
When Liberty her bridal choice,
Fair Truth with genuine faith shall wed
Upon the altars of our idols fled,
But true,—then only shall the past be dead.

VII.

Buried, but O not dead. Dead!—why,
Do Heaven's sunbeams ever die?
—Like all that's fair they pass away,
But spring to life another day;
Does beauty, once seen, ever die?
It may,—but like a bliss gone by,
Or like a poet's dream, it wanes,
It's gone;—the vision still remains!
So has it ever been, shall be,
Till all have died that would be free.
—If o'er the headstones of our dead,
The last, last orison is said,
Should Sympathy in piteous pain
Implore their tribute, but in vain,
Forgetfulness e'er scoff' to feel,
Theirs' has become a dead appeal,
Then woe to its survivors, woe;—
And relics of that ruin, know
That virtue then shall shun the earth
That gave it death, yet saw its birth.
And yet, proud dead, ye shall not be the last of all,
Another, in the self-same cause has yet to fall!

VIII.

But O what recollections now,
Sad Muse, have passed across my brow;

What gory spectacle of war
Has led me from my subject far.—
I looked upon the sky, and wrought
My feelings into wanton thought,
I fancied *there* above my head,
I held communion with the dead,
—The day had faded into night,
And Fancy in its silly light,
Had changed each phantom cloud that flitted fast
Away—into a Spirit of the past.

IX.

But O forgive if I have strayed
Too long,—for now thou art obeyed,
And spare me for the spirit's sake;
It was a dream,—but I awake;—
Awake to other sights, and hear
But faint at first, yet growing near
The clash of steel, and shout once more,
And shock of battle as before,
And see the gasp—the spasm, the last
But one,—life's struggle ending fast.
For howsoever goes the fight,
And fickle Victory may alight,
However headlong may have been
The rout—still Death must ever win.
—And see the British beaten back
At last with blood upon their track;
They yield not, yet they cannot fly,
They stand,—for fleeing were to die.
It is not hopeless for Despair
Now nerves their arm to greater dare;
Each singles out his willing foe,
And aims at him his frantic blow;

For once has vanished their alarm,
When blood has maddened every arm.
They cut, they slash;—but short the tale,
Their madness is without avail.—
Can Honor perish in the fray
Alone and unavenged;—and say,
Can Truth with equal odds at bay
Succumb,—the ruin of a day!
No! no! and if at times they may,
We doubt it still, nor even grieve,
We see—but we cannot believe.

X.

And now the British weaker grow
Till almost paralysed their blow,
Some sue for mercy, some for peace;—
'Tis granted, and the combats cease.—
—Sickly at heart, Glenburnyme drew
In single line his gallant crew;
Some from a dozen gashes bled,
Yet spoke not—many more were dead.
The Chief himself, whose single arm
Had felled, as lightning mid the storm,
Where it had fallen—staunched in vain
And oft the fast recurring stain
Upon his breast, and though he knew,
Betrayed not he was wounded too.
De Mar had sheathed his sword at last,
Insatiate from the fierce repast,
And not until plain and precise,
The order had been given twice;
Then softening at the touching sight
Of comrades in so helpless plight,
Had hastened to each sufferer's side
To aid—or comfort ere he died.—

XI.

But scarcely has each weapon, red
With life's rich stream so freely shed
Been dried,—so fitting to increase
The gentler offices of peace,
Has Carnage fled, and scarcely too
Has human pity soft and true
Succeeded human hatred, than
To more congenial fields again
Compassion fain must take her flight,
Nor live in such ignoble light.—
Sharp rings the bugle, and the note
Of war from closer to remote
Retreats in cadence echoing sped,
Startles the warrior and the steed.—

XII.

The Captain turns him to the new
Alarm, to whence the clarion blew,
And sees with awe, not wholly free
From fear, a column of the enemy.
Eager he scans their serried rows,
Until but for a moment glows
His soldier's heart, and burns his breast
Their valor once again to test.
But cools that martial heat
And fades that virtuous flame, so meet
In Freedom's cause—as counting o'er
His men, he finds them but a score.
"Draw, draw," he speaks, "stand firm and true,
"And I shall win or fall with you;
"There come the foe, and we must die
"Or shun him,—comrades, shall we fly!"
—Fly!—they who had not fled before,
And shrink, they—steeped in British gore.—

"Marion and Carolina! now
"And evermore, by them we vow,
"Her ruins fresh and his renown
"To strike until the last is down!"

XIII.

Glenburnyme spoke not, nor was stirred,
Yet knew it was no idle word,
—He could not but respect their dash
And steel, yet felt that it was rash.—
And yet as far as reached his sight
There seemed no avenue for flight;
Nor hesitated he,—all chance
Was gone—he saw it at a glance.—
Then whispers hurried words of cheer,
They may not win, yet sell as dear
As might their latest life, contend
With fury to the bitter end.
—Flashes again their kindling steel,
Descends and with as fierce a zeal
Their blow;—they stand, repel the shock
Impassive as the ocean rock.—
As fiercely as the ocean surge,
Return the British to the charge;
They shout, they strike, they push, they fall,
Still vainly for th' unbroken wall
Is there;—but lastly foiled and mad
They rush from every side, and sad
To say Glenburnyme is undone,
Nor yields,—'tis almost five to one.—

XIV.

Bleeding and faint, the REBEL views
His faithful fall and yet refuse

To yield,—one tear cannot retain,
'Tis half in pity, half in pain.
They rally round him, back to back,
And stubborn foil each new attack,
Strike home;—and when but one low, low
Is laid, 'tis two more of the foe.
And now the British leader fain
To spare them he had failed to gain,
His force from the disputed field
Withdraws, and summons them to yield.
"Surrender rebels or ye die!"
—It left no option but to fly,
Or fight;—there was no hope in strife
Save death,—but flying might be life.—
Glenburnyme felt 'twere worse than vain
To bear the onset once again,
Yet knew the temper of his men
Too fully to surrender then,
—And yet had Valor left him but
The shadow of itself,—nor cut
Asunder that which in the strife
Renews its action and its life,
Had Havoc spared him at the flood
Of Heroism more of blood
Than victims, than might he have led,
Have struggled on and on,—have bled,
Fallen,—yet fought it on again
Till death—unconquered even then.—

XV.

But no!—he felt upon his brow
The fever of his faintness now,
The all-absorbing action past,
He knew the end was coming fast.—

"Fly, fly!"—he cried, "my gallant band,
Away, I pray ye,—nay command."
But loth to leave their cherished chief,
They gathered, nor concealed their grief,
They wept, protested loud and grim,
They prayed—they swore to die with him.
He smiled—then sobbed—the weakness past,
Resumed his calmness to the last,
Yet with a strength-surviving pride
To wield his sabre vainly tried,
Essayed to grasp its hilt, but no!
Subdued---he sternly bade them go.
Then waved his other hand,---"Where Marion's men
"Have made their eyry---we shall meet again."—

XVI.

They pause, then turn their horses' feet,
This parting sadder than retreat,
Then off,—reluctantly but fleet.
'Tis skillful foe indeed may fetch
Them now o'er native soil and stretch.
—Abandoned now, Glenburnyme feels
A choking at the breath,—he reels,
A film creeps o'er his reddening sight,
Then darkness as of growing night,
He hears not, sees not those around,
Then totters, sinks upon the ground.
Unseen to him, the dead—the sky,
The British horsemen hurrying by,
Unheard their shouts of rage and war,
His foes, his friends unheeded are.
He lies—though wounded, not alone,
In blood, though warm, not all his own,—
He seems to sleep, the infant smile,
So far remote from guilt or guile,

Sits on his lip, and Peace in pride,
—Pale as the garb of virgin bride,—
Shades with the unresisting lid
The eye—perhaps forever hid.
—The daylight wanes, the shadows come,
The rebel wakes not, but is dumb;
Nor trembling stirs him, nor a thrill,
The features, they look smiling still.
—Yet note it, *then*, and now again,
Methought I marked it,—'twas of pain,
A twitching of the mouth—a grasp
At air,—more air—convulsive gasp.

—Stoop stranger, friend, whoe'er thou art,
So,—place thy hand upon his heart,
And take upon thy lap the brow
So pale—and bathe its temples now,
And bend thee o'er the silent face;
Are these the features thou wouldst trace?
And gently brush away the hair,
So, gently—'tis a woman's care;
And mark the wan, yet smiling air,
The glow of triumph that is there,
And bend thy cheek down, down upon his breath,
Nor tremble so—but say—can that be death?

XVII.

Death!—*that* so smiling, so serene?
And pray, where is the frightful mien
It bears at times, the awful stare,
The eye of horror, of despair,
So stark—so set—so dull an eye,
We shudder lest we too should die!
Where?—wouldst thou see it? then behold
Yon wretch with limbs together rolled

Beneath him, and distorted face;
'Tis laughter with a wild grimace.
Ha! laughter! but the buried nail
Deep-rooted breathes another tale;
Ha! laughter,—for the gaping skull
Seems grinning, and the bloody pool,
And over-spattered brain forsooth,
The red, red gum, the pearly tooth,
Bear semblance of some hideous mouth.
He lies upon his back, his eye
Averted from the soft, clear sky
In hatred,—his the dying fierce
And foul,—the last appeal—a curse!
—And wouldst thou know another, see
Deep, deep beyond the surface he
Has struck his teeth; his hands have clasped
The turf and unrelenting grasped
The earth, with mad and savage grip,
And foam and froth are on his lip;
His eyes start from their sockets too,
His flesh has putrid grown and blue;—
No fouler death the villian dies,
Or writhing dog that poisoned lies.
—That is the Death that spoiler may await,
The one death his—th' inevitable fate;
That is the Death such awful terror throws
Around the soul, and with such vivid glows
Of gloom that shuddering Contemplation screens
Her stricken sight and flies to nobler scenes.

XVIII.

And wouldst thou know another?—then,
Then look ye now to yonder men;—
—See ye the Wolfe of Abraham,
The lion then, but now the lamb,

As Death in agony appears,
Lie smiling at the generous tears,
That round his fame-becoming bed
By all but him alone are shed.
Then mark the victim of the strife
With but a flickering flame of life,
Strive on, till victory is won,
Then sink to rest;—his work is done.
"They fly!"—"Who fly?"—"The enemy fly."—
"Praise God! for now I long to die."
—Mark ye again, as prouder verse shall tell
The hero's greatness, how a Lawrence fell.

XIX.

Nor galling disappointment broke
His gallant spirit 'neath its stroke,
Nor mortal stab with fatal aim
Could once his eagle ardor tame.
And thou O goddess of the fray,
Thou Muse god-mother of my lay,
Grant, if perchance thy kindred swain
In life should see his virtue vain
Because down-trodden, and his cause
Forsaken for the fool's applause,
And though the world should drag
Him down to earth like wounded stag
That scorns to flee, yet proudly may
Defiant face them all at bay,
O grant if he be fallen, brought
To Death,—that *he* shall weaken not.
Nor fear in agony to speak
Like Lawrence of the Chesapeake,
The dying words upon his lip
As well;—"O don't give up the ship."

XX.

—De Mar with tender care (for he
It was), has lifted to his knee
The pale wan features of his Chief,
And sought to bring him such relief
In pain as he might most require;
If now indeed the fading fire,
Which burned so warm and bright anon
In vigor,—was not wholly gone.—
—See there, he tears the dress aside,
And notes the ghastly fissure wide
And deep within the stately breast,
That heaves not now, nor seems oppressed,
Its flames, its very pain repressed.—
And yet there may be hope, for still
And warm, yet feeble as the rill
That springs along the parched hill
With feeble murmur and uncertain course,
And thirsting lip and insufficient source,
So streamed the bloody current slowly forth
Adown his bosom to the moistened earth.

XXI.

"—O Heaven," cries De Mar, "thou God,"
That lookest from yon pure abode
Upon this awful sight, restore
To him the heart that beats no more.
This cold, insensate form to me
Is life,—'tis all I ask of Thee!
O God that I had been the first;
This day, this battle be accursed!
—But no! 'tis not for *him* to die
That such rare virtues sanctify,
So manly, yet so meek, so proud
And yet so humble when he bowed

Him down to Thee.—O let
Him see, Thy fair creation yet,
O God! and gaze upon Thy glowing sky,
And live to bless with me Thy name on high."

XXII.

This friend in need, this angel nurse,
So lofty for so trite a verse,
Now turns him to the sleeping brave,
—For love may yet avail to save;
Staunches the cruel gash, and frees
The throat to the reviving breeze,
Binds up the wound with care and skill,
And soft, considerate touch, until
The life-blood bleeds no more, and heat
In haste resumes its former seat,—
And lo! the pulse begins to beat;
—But O so feeble and so spent,
That one on other task intent
But one of love—had failed to mark
The glad and yet uncertain spark,
The smoke, the ember that may tell
Of life.—De Mar has marked it well,
Then turns with fervent gaze on high
In gratitude his dew-dimmed eye,
Nor speaks.—Full oft when joys scarce-hoped for reach
The heart, 'tis then incapable of speech;
When God's own signal favors deeply touch,
A word is naught,—the soul too full for such.

XXIII.

The truest passion may not find
An utterance,—'tis within the mind;

And feeling is expressed not by
A vow,— but surest in the eye.
The tongue may speak, when raptures melt
The soul, but half of what is felt.
So with De Mar. He knew beside
How much his silent thanks implied
To Him who watchful and in solemn state
Above, must know that he was not ingrate.

XXIV.

And now the wounded Rebel seems
Returning unto life, as gleams
His eye, but faintly to the sight,
And strives to pierce the sombre light.
De Mar unto his lips has pressed
His flask; the sufferer drinks with zest
And eagerly, till the last drop quaffed
He sinks, as though the welcome draught,
Has with it likewise drained at length
His little, last remaining strength;
But soon revives, till low and faint,
De Mar observes his sad complaint;
—Then opens out his eyelids wide,
And rolls his gaze from side to side,
Till fixed at once and wild they are
In wonder on a distant star,
Breathes slow and deeply like a lengthened sigh,
And groans aloud, then murmurs—" Where am I?"

CANTO IV.

AGNES.

I.

"Here, here, upon my breast, whose life
Would give thee back again what strife
And war have taken," cries De Mar.
"And who art thou, and where, where are
My men? Not here;—methought the foe
Had sued for quarter,—and—but O,
My vision fails me;—have I dreamed,
Or acted—for me sleep has seemed
So strange! De Mar! I saw him there
Beside me, marked him thrice forbear
To slay when he had conquered; thrice
He strove their fury to entice
Upon himself, and turned their aim
From mine unto his own weak frame.
I saw it all, and then I fell—
The rest—the rest—I cannot tell.
But who is here;—and has my sight
Departed—or can this be night?"
"Awake, Glenburnyme, nay arise;
'Tis I; look—listen—recognize
De Mar; arise, and I shall take
Thee hence to where for pity's sake
Shall tend thee with an angel care
Another—thrice again as fair."—

II.

"De Mar! O God be praised that thou
At least art safe, good friend, for now

Since by God's goodness we have met
I feel that I should struggle yet
To live.—Lend me thine arm for I
Am dizzy, and my brain is nigh
On fire."
—Painfully and slow,
This fond fraternal couple go,
De Mar supports him on the way
And strives each motion to allay.
They pass the fallen—foe and friend,
And on their careful footsteps wend
In silence and in pain. The one
By wounds and loss of blood undone;
(He may recover,—life is strong
Within the happy and the young,
And Conscience in the warm and eager breast
Of all restorers often is the best.)

III.

—The other, ill at heart, for there,
The worm its triumph might prepare,
Already was its pall o'erspread
In livid hues upon his dead
Past hopes; and yet its fatal sway
Had left within that breast each day
More heart than it had torn away.
He loved but one—and she no less than e'er before,
And yet he felt he loved his neighbor more and more.

IV.

Wounded in body—and in mind,
The pair proceed;—till far behind
The scene of battle;—while the night
In starry splendor reigned;—and bright

The sky with glitter all aglow
Looked on alike on weal and woe.
Glenburnyme faint—and though a prey
To torture—watched some twinkling ray,
Some starry lamp suspended high
Upon a cornice of the sky,
As though its scintillations might
Expose his future fate to light.
And strange to say, it seemed to blaze
In growing brightness to his gaze,
Until he read within its flame
The promises of future fame.

V.

De Mar, whene'er fatigue would cause
The Rebel in their course to pause,
Would often turn his restless eye
Upon the azure of the sky,
Till shortly his predestined sight
Would mark some humbler satellite.
But waning, waning it would seem
To him—like some fast fading dream,
Then dazzling with a fitful beam
Of radiance, vanish—and to gleam
No more.—Such seemed his fortune; or
Whene'er some flashing meteor,
Discharged the dome of heaven through,
In vivid coruscations flew,
The lustre that it shed around
Expiring ere it reached the ground,
He fain must start, and stop for breath,
He read an omen of his death.—
—And so it is with all—and where
Another hopes, another finds despair;

He loves to be alone, and he
In solitude would die.—The tree
That shading animates the one,
And screens it from the burning sun,
Is death unto another.—Love
May kill, and love may bless.—Above
Alone may joys together move.
The spectral cloud that yonder rears
Its changing form, then disappears,
Is by the bent of human thought
Into a thousand objects wrought;
Some fancy in its weird-like face
The outline of their hopes to trace,
Their wishes and their dreams;—and some,
By strange presension overcome,
Have seen it slow and solemn loom
Into a *Prophet* of their doom.
Perhaps it may have been the past
Reflected in so overcast
A sky,—perhaps within the ominous air
They saw—the spectre of their conscience there.

VI.

And they have started! for the bad
Gaze not so fondly on the glad,
Soft azure of the air, for there
Within the very heaven, where
And when the clouds themselves are fair,
They see no sky in radiance spread,
But must conjure a *Hell* instead.
But Hope is universal—'tis the same,
And Happiness the common end and aim.

VII.

Glenburnyme, half a corpse, implores
That he might live. De Mar deplores,
In strength and in the prime of life,
That he has still survived the strife.
And yet they both are hopeful;—he
Of fame and fortune; he to see
In death his deeper wound but healed
Upon his country's battle-field.
—They now had gone an hour,—not more,
—A long, long hour,—when before
Their grateful sight, and high arose
A lofty mansion. Soft repose
Presided o'er th' imposing pile
Which threw nor sound, nor beacon, while
The oaks and shadows deep as well
That rose around it seemed to tell
Nor living soul nor inmate there
To welcome the benighted pair.—
And yet there might have been instead
Perhaps some tenant from the dead;
For who may know what spirits share
Unseen, unfelt, the vital air
With us, or what unsettled soul,
Unloosened from the vile control
Of earth—may not abide with men,
At times to sit beside them when
They sit, or breathe aloud or spring to light
Upon the solemn stillness of the night.

VIII.

And such the awful aspect which
It bore—this mansion of the rich.
Perhaps anon, when hand in hand,
And peace and plenty blessed the land,

Perhaps each sombre shadow now
Had drawn some love-inspired vow,
Perhaps each window blazed with light,
A solace to the ear and sight,
Upon the darkness of the night.
—But not so now;—and is it why
That gloom!—De Mar has heaved a sigh?
And why he tottering knocks—to start
And quiver in his very heart;
And does he fear,—that pale and white
His brow is moistened as in fright?
—"Who knocks"—comes on the listening ear,
Pitched part in sweetness, part in fear;
—An accent plaintive as the stream
And strange—the echo of a dream;
Soft, murmuring music in the key
So soothing to the sobbing sea,
Yet clear and trusting as the sound
Of water rippling o'er the ground.
"Tis I, fair Lady," cries De Mar,
"For God and Mercy, quick, unbar."
"And who art thou so boldly seeks
"A welcome here?"—the Lady speaks.
"Who is it? then thou knowest me not,
"And yet forgive, I had forgot,
"Fair Lady, how fatigue and war
"Had changed my voice,—I am De Mar."

IX.

"De Mar!" the Lady answers, "O
"How foolish that I knew not so
"Before; thrice welcome—patient be,
"And I shall open all to thee."
One moment—but a short-lived while
The youth in gladness seemed to smile;

But as the rare and fitful star,
That casts a dimness from afar
In wonder through the prison bar
To cheer the prisoner within,
Unconscious of his heinous sin,
Alike, that smile but served to show
In contrast all his former woe;
The star, the ray, but pointed out
What lay *within*, and what *without;*
What was, and what might even be
Were *his* heart set at liberty,
The liberty not oft possessed,
The *only* freedom and the best,
Which *giving*—taking life from none—
Commands two hearts instead of one.

X.

In haste to rest his weary feet,
And eager with desire to greet
So old a friend, the Lady sweet
And softly draws the bolts, her cheeks
Aglow with pleasure as she speaks.—
" Whoe'er in want or hunger roam
" Are welcome to my father's home."
—They enter, and they meet at last.
Perhaps the memory of the past
This meeting now appalled,
A long ago which had passed away
Like summer morn, or a dream of May
And could not be recalled.
The Lady met his glance, but vain
From him to screen her look of pain
She tried,—*his* look had spoken more
Than *vowing* from his lips before.

And yet she warmly pressed his hand,
And bade him freely to command
All, all, that hostess might bestow. He sighed,
Then thought how much that might be—then replied.

XI.

" Lady, to sue thy care I came,
" For him, Glenburnyme is his name,
" My Chief:—I know thy heart is mild,"
(De Mar has trembled as a child),
" And kind,—that Virtue hath no fear,
" Or joy that it has spared
" To thee—that Pity hath no tear
" No pang but it has shared
" With thee;—then let thine office here
" Exert its all on one so dear
" To me,—that may not be a claim
" Upon thy heart,—yet Lady, blame
" Me not, my cause is Charity, and fain,
" Fain would I swear such cause were never vain
" With thee."

XII.

" De Mar hath spoken but
" Too well," she speaks, "nor may I shut
" Mine eyesight to that other day,
" Our younger days, when both at play,
" A knight as gallant then as now
" He hath so valiant kept his vow
" That oft revenged, amid our game
" Each fancied insult to my name.
" I owe thee fealty, gentle knight,
" Command, and it shall be requite.—
" —Yet O why tarry we, thy friend
" Is so, so pale and weak, pray lend

" To mine thine efforts that he may
" Upon this couch, all-trusting lay
" Him down. Why see, he cannot stand,
" Or even walk alone; his hand
" Is cold;—and this—'tis blood upon his shirt;
" Poor wounded fellow! is he badly hurt?

XIII.

" And how?—and where?—there rest thy head
" Brave one, till on a softer bed,
" Thou art conveyed; nay try not e'en
" To speak,—thy meaning well I glean
" Within thine eye;—but thanks indeed
" Were folly—for 'tis *we* have need
" Be grateful, since thou may'st yet
" Survive to conquer;—nor forget
" The part thou mayest yet fulfill,
" Thy land, its daughters claim thee still."
—Meanwhile the Rebel scarcely knew
What passed before his clouded view;
And yet his throbbing breast betrayed
He marked full dearly what conveyed
The voice,—the accents of the maid.
—Nor gladder marks the wild gazelle
The callings of its mate, that swell
The melody from dell to dell.—
Glenburnyme felt, he scarce knew what,
Yet gazed, then listened, then forgot
That he was wounded;—is it not
The heart,—the heart,—'tis *that* that vivifies.
'Tis there that feeling, beauty has it rise.

XIV.

And well her charms might he have viewed
Who knelt in graceful attitude
Beside his sickly couch—for if a ray
From Heaven e'er had wandered—there it lay!

XV.

She looked intent within his face
With searching eyes, as though to trace
Its pain within, the depth of sense,
The manhood that were banished thence,
As though to see what might recall,
Renew, revive, rekindle all
Again that lit it up before;
She yearned perhaps to give it more
Than Death itself might ever have undone,
Her life and his—two lives instead of one.

XVI.

And well might he have gazed aghast,
Returned *her* gazing with his last
Remaining strength, for she had warmed
Her feelings so, she stood disarmed,
She saw—she knew the Rebel not,
The stranger in the friend forgot.
There beamed such pity in her eye,
Such fondness that he wished to die,
Could dying have increased its light,
Or marked her image on his sight
Fore'er;—his soul was wrapped in one
Emotion, and his life begun
But now;—he knew not whence the bliss,
The joy proceeded, whether this,
Or that existence it might be,
—He felt one thing—the joy was she,
The rapture was of her,—naught else,—'twas O,
'Twas all he knew—'twas all he cared to know!

XVII.

But vain might he have sought to reach
The depth that eloquence of speech

Conveyed;—so mute and yet so speaking,
So soft, indefinite and feeling,
An Idol swimming in the mind,
Sweet-dreams with sweeter dreams entwined.
Such was the purport of her pregnant eye
With raptures yet unborn—and still to die.—

XVIII.

Soft as the cooing of the dove,
And then the very soul of love,
Now tender they as naught beside,
Then flashing with a conscious pride,
They might have added to the light
Of day, or lit the gloom of night;
One glance had bound your every sense
And left you breathless in suspense,
You saw you knew not what, and yet
You felt that you might ne'er forget,
You might not live beyond their sphere,
Or thrive if they could not be near,
But if your own, then leave unsought
All other joys, for they were naught;
So wildly strange, so passing odd,
A link between yourself and God;
What though they boasted not a hue
To match the soft air's azure blue,
Or sparkled not the kindred flame
That robs the night of half its name,
The coal-black orbs whose dearest doom,
And best of passions to consume,
And be consumed itself; what though
The evening tints, or sunset's glow
In hazel beauty had not settled there,

What if 'neath Heaven none might well compare,
They shamed the Nature that had naught so fair;
The eyes of Agnes—they were gray—*love*-gray—
What more can I, what more could poet say.

XIX.

And then there was a something, (well
Such softness, ask the wild gazelle
The reason for it—it my tell),
A something in the pensive lash
That made you almost wish the flash
Of every glance were all repressed,
You prayed to see them e'er at rest,
So winning they, you almost wished the glow
All their's—there were no greater joy below.

XX.

Her hair; you might have seen its dyes
Of golden brown upon the skies
Of evening, or within the cloud
With sunset's glorious tints endowed,
As gently wavy as the brook
Disporting from each mossy nook,
And changing—as the light or shade
Upon its glossy surface played;
Now rich and warm, as sunbeams tossed
In waste about each lustre lost
To Heaven,—darker, when that ray,
Distracted with the dawning day
It bore—in very envy tried
Their halo from itself to hide.
Nor chiselled form of goddess born
To breathe the grace-imparting morn

Of Mount Olympus,—no nor she,
The rarest offspring of the sea,
A fairer head than hers might raise,
Unconscious of the eager gaze,
Or bend it in more classic curve,
Or nobler attitudes observe.

XXI.

The maiden Agnes knew not guile
Or wrong—nor wooed another style
Than Nature's,—free from art was she,
As youth and candor well may be.—
Her locks in loose profusion wound
Confusedly her temples round,
In rebel ringlets sported now
To kiss the paleness from her brow,
So ravishing decked that head
You saw—your heart were more than said;
And yet so mild, so free from care,
You yearned to pass your fingers there,
To linger, touch each silky tress,
And shudder at the mute caress,
Nor wished the truant lock confine,
Nor take it—'twere already thine,
But ah—to see so wont to thrill,
Those charms, in worse disorder still.—

XXII.

Rich as the mellow down the bower
That held her tenderness—a flower
Scarcely developed yet, whose doom
In life but wanted the perfume,
Of love, to kiss it into bloom.

That breast had never learned to throb,
Except in joy, and if a sob
Perchance some keener pang provoked,
Her face not one emotion cloaked,
Her features spoke her inmost soul, and who
Could see her weeping without weeping too!

XXIII.

De Mar looked on with folded arms,
And watched his Chief—the maiden's charms,
Nor wearied once his mournful glance
Of her,—the rebel's seeming trance.
—He too was fair; he had the soul
That lends such beauty to the whole
Exterior,—that expression there,
Which seen but once becomes fore'er
A vision, till the puzzled heart
At length forgets it usual part,
And knows not which were well or worst,
To love, befriend or worship first.
—He knew that he was trusted;—what
Cared he for that;—the paltry jot
Of what is best we deem a curse;
—We want it not,—'tis worse, far worse
Than none at all—the lofty heart
That would have *all*—will scorn a part.
And he knew more—that he was loved,
That e'en his own despair had moved
Unmeaningly to tears oft unrepressed
The idol of his warm and manly breast.

XXIV.

But O such love,—such mockery
To him it seemed,—idolatry,

Had been a truth besides its lie;
It might *destroy*, but vivify,
No! no!—'twas something yet to die.
O why could she not hate him, scorn
Him even as the modest morn;
Hates the shadow of a sigh,
Scorns the semblance of a lie:
Even as the winding streamlet
Through the bowers of the violet,
Drowns the thistle in its wrath,
Spurns it from its crystal path.
Hate had been better, ceaseless hate
Had damned his future;—what of that?
Had love, *his* love not overthrown
His happiness—and with its own
Strong hands not dug the fatal pit
Of all his hopes, and slain with it
His heart—alive perhaps to one,
Alone—but wholly dead to none;—
And how could Hate have scorned to blast
What love had throttled out at last?

XXV.

And yet amid this wreck of dreams,
Of flitted joys, and stranded schemes,
The rock that checked the vessel's course,
And marred and paralysed its force,
Still kept it from a final grave,
Denied it to the eager wave;
—Might not some more propitious swell,
Returning on itself, impell
Its pathway o'er the surging main,
To float,—perhaps take wing again?

XXVI.

Like sinking crew that see the strand,
—'Tis naked,—what of that—'tis land,
De Mar to half his former buoyancy
Revived, to fresher sympathy
Awoke—when sprang upon his sight
The shining of his beacon light.
—And pray of what is living made
But light alternately and shade;
What though there be no day without
A cloud, no joy without a doubt,
And O, no smile without a tear,
No wedding but a burial near,
Whatever be the dark, the gloom,
The shroud, the sorrow or the doom,
Somewhere there is a star,—despair
Alone, and *total* darkness ne'er.
Somewhere a star is shining, there
Perhaps he least expects its glare.
True, man may shut it out, he may
Be blind ay to the light of day,
He may deny it entrance to
That spirit which it would imbue
With life once more, rejoice, renew;
And yet it beams eternal.—He
That feeds its flame for thee, for me,
For him whate'er his state may be,
Hath placed it in the placid sky,
Unmoring, faithful as the eye
Of God,—an ever—constant flame,
In death a joy,—the life of fame,
In woe, in peril—still the same.

Muse of the poet, Muse divine,
Joy of another sphere, and mine,

Thou art *my* star—a pale one, far
And frail,—yet none the less a star.
What though a foreign agency
May strive to mar thy brilliancy,
To stifle what thou hast of flame,
My humble hopes to *humbler* aim
Direct,—if thou art faithful still
Through doubt and fear, and gloom, and ill,
I may not falter;—shall the eaglet's flight
Be changed, because the unaccustomed height

XXVII.

Is dizzy?—shall the soldier cry
Enough, because the fray is nigh,
The harassed pilgrim turn him back,
Depressed, because the night is black;
The shrine be desolate because
The way is marked with fear and flaws?
—Go ask the noble falcon why
At paltry prey he scorns to fly;
Go ask the eagle too to lower
His lofty perch, or cease to soar.
—Propitious Muse, whose modest strings
I touch with dread,—I claim no wings
As powerful as theirs,—as bright,
No eyry where to steer my flight.
The home I know is moor and lake,
Nor other flight care I to make,
Save that the Pelican descries
Beneath Louisiana's mellow skies,
No loftier perch than will afford
The guard of her undaunted sword.
—And should the lowly bard succeed
To pluck,—nor asks a greater meed,—

A feather from some bird of prey,
Some lyrist with a prouder lay,
O grant that if he may not rise
Upon its pinions to their skies,
The borrowed plumage may in part redeem
The simple clothing of his lowly theme.

XXVIII.

Nor deem him pressing for he feels
How much of weekness he reveals
At every step,—his tottering way,
Expiring verse, and strength betray
That he hath need of help;—his pen
Is helpless, and his fellow-men
Would scoff to know that he was poor,
Though he had dared their scorn before;
And were the letters on his brow
Of want so many furrows now,
He yet might brave the mongrel cur
That would his sacred mission slur.
—But there are touches in the heart
That tell—if nobler instincts they impart
Than scorn,—perchance a kindred knee
Receives the blow that strikes at me;
O spare, Muse that has made an orphan of
My verse—*strike me*, but spare a mother's love!

XXIX.

—See yonder watcher on the tower
That marks the haven of an hour,
How tremblingly he stands, and pale,
In waiting for some sluggish sail.
He scans the farthest sea in vain,
Then sighs, then hoping looks again,

Then starts,—the white-winged bird appears,
Its gallant pennon proudly rears
Above the wave,—but drooping, bowed
His sinking spirit—'tis a cloud.—
But there beyond, as yet a speck,
The spars—he waits—the rising deck
He sees—then breathless bends him o'er,
More anxious now than e'er before,
And listens to the gale, and notes
With joy that still the vessel floats;
But laboring she comes before the blast
And break her spars, and bends each creaking mast.

XXX.

She rises on the billows tossed,
She plunges—sinks—and she is lost;
But no—she pitches on once more,
And struggling nears the welcome shore.
Battered she seems by distant cruise,
Her course like crippled game pursues,
The raging seas with giant strides
In fury climbs her reeking sides,
The demon waters round her roar,
And howls the wild wind more and more,
Defiant still of storm or stress,
She flies no signal of distress,
Nor craves a rescue from the kindred coast,
The crew is brave, the pilot at his post.

XXXI.

—Watcher, the danger now is past,
The welcome goal is reached at last,
Rejoice with me, nor longer chafe,
The vessel is in port and safe;

—But ah! her spars are broke, her sail
In tatters, torn by gust and gale;
She leaks,—and battered by the squall
Her hull—she floats and that is all!
—And now, thou tenant of another world,
Thou Muse, before my last, last sail is furled,
Perhaps fore'er,
Had I not better seek some humbler lot
To vegetate at best—perhaps to rot
Like others there?
And shall I cast the pilot wheel aside,
Nor dare to steer to oceans yet untried?
Because, forsooth, my bark is almost wrung
Asunder—say is not the vessel young
And valiant still?—or shall the sailor shun
The boisterous sea because the haven's won?
What though the anchors all are gone! can'st thou
Not me with new—with fresher hopes endow;
Refill my wings—the damage yet repair,
And urge me onward where the sky is fair?
—Then wake the slumbers of the Southern breeze,
And waft me on to more propitious seas,
Nor let again desponding vapors loom,
Nor one horizon hang with growing gloom.—
—Here goes,—the sails are set, and thanks to thee,
The wind is fair,—I seek the open sea;
The buoyant bark goes bounding from the strand,
And glad, and free—the wind is from the land;
Cheerful the crew, the cargo light of weight,
Yet seaman have a care—'tis precious freight.
The bark may fill—the mariner go down,
And perish all—ambition and renown,
But last in peril he—to leave the drowning deck,
The noblest spectacle of all—the ragged wreck.

PART II.

CANTO I.

A FATHER.

I.

Morn, early morn, enticing Morn,
To youth, to hope, to rapture born,
Nurse of the golden—gathering light
Thou art—the fairest dream of night.
Gems rest upon thy smiling brow
With sparkle pure as maiden's vow,
The whole creation hastes to greet
The silver cords around thy feet.
Thy steps are loosened now, and free,
Thy spirit spreads on land and sea;
O linger longer now, and stay
Th' alarming progress of the day;
Why hasten so?—Alas thy joys are past,
Thy placid charms go melting, melting fast,
O morn, thou art too fair a thing to last!

—Fresh-laden with the dews of night,
Ablaze with all the new-born light,
The morning mist comes skimming o'er
The land from rude Atlantic's shore.
From hill to hill-top slanting slide
The lurking beams, till growing, glide
Through lattice;—there intrusive peep,
Stopping to tickle the lids of sleep.
—The laggard starting in surprise,
Half-opens his reluctant eyes,

And rubs them;—yawns—then rolls him o'er
Perhaps to slumber on once more,
—Pass on, thou sunbeam, 'tis in vain
That Morn would vindicate its reign.
But welcome to the maiden's bower,
Thou wakest Nature's fairest flower
To blushes, and to life—O envied boon!
Fair morning here, no! thou art none too soon.

II.

O glorious privilege of day,
To steal with ever cunning ray
Within the sanctum of the maid,
And chase away the lingering shade;
To rouse each petal into grace,
Some soft, unconcious line to trace,
Perhaps some wild array of charms,
So harmless, yet so potent arms;
The silken lash, the bosom fair,
Inviting lips, disordered hair;—
She moves, she blushes—sunbeam O how sweet!
Hush! forward Muse, thy rhyme grows indiscreet.

III.

—The lofty towers of Ruthven hall,
That pierced the woodland thick and tall,
Had barely caught the first pale light
That gemmed each more conspicuous height;
The roosting cock prepared his spring,
And crowed, and flapped his waking wing,
Ere human sleep relaxed its sway
And yielded to the laws of day.
'Twas early yet when o'er the lawn
Still dancing in the dews of dawn,

Came tripping onward, half-afraid,
Half-shy—a nymph—or else a maid.
An angel from the ground she springs,
And light—as though she had its wings.
And stooping low, and bending o'er,
To rise—not fairer than before,
For that could scarcely be,—the maid
Caressing—throws into the shade
Some blossom—ere she starts away—
All wondering at the early day.
And now she stops to pluck a rose
Whose color like her color glows;—
The fairy fingers grasp the stalk,
But lo! the stubborn fibres balk
Her efforts,—yet she tries afresh,
Then starts—a thorn has pierced her flesh.
—The maiden shrieks not, but preserves
A smile, yet half-alarmed observes
The red stream coursing to the nail,
—Her cheek is for a moment pale;—
Then laughs away the fear, and sips
The nectar with her pouting lips;
The blood less rich in dye would fain
Enhance the hue it cannot stain.
Successful now she plucks the bloom,
And gives, nor robs it its perfume;
And one upon her breast, and one
Within her hair, she plants in fun.
Yet modest looks if none is nigh
Ere decks the head would suit a sky;
And not so easily she fain
Would order in those locks maintain,
For they, indignant to enthrone
A charm that would usurp their own,
Have burst their fastenings away,

And toppled down in grim array.
—Embarrassed now, fair Agnes slow
Yet surely, with her cheeks aglow,
Collects this wealth of grace around
Her brows again so fitly crowned,
Till fast with net and noose combined,
The truant tresses are confined.
Nor wants a mirror once, for well might she
In every beauty her reflection see.

IV.

O how adorable the pose,
When ripening maiden graceful throws
Her circling arms around her head,
Like wreath about another spread;
And bending downward with meek eyes
Blushes lest any should surprise
The hidden charms she would not have revealed,
Until each rapture she might willing yield.

V.

And so felt Agnes as she stood,
Unseen, in matchless attitude,
And fearful lest she should disclose
One grace,—all reddening, all a rose.
The colors fought on cheek so fair,
Her blush, their blood, all mingled there;
And from the rude encounter burst,
—The last as lovely as the first,—
A new born flush with all the grace
Of sunrise on the heaven's face;
'Twas Morn with Morn together thrown,
Each blushing lest it be outshone.

—And who is that approaches now
With age deep-furrowed on his brow,
And tottering with the moss of years,
In contrast with the morn, appears;
His steps distrustful of the way,
His form is bent, his locks are gray.—
O venerable sire!—like oak
Beneath the storms of winter broke,
Whose straggling roots by many snows
Upturned, and washed by many flows,
Have all but lost their hold on earth,
Yet cling on to the parent hearth,
And warm its look as sunset smiling weaves
A farewell beauty round its withering leaves.

VI.

The maiden springs her sire to meet,
And guide, assist his staggering feet,
And lifts her on her tiny tips
To kiss the blessing from his lips.
" Dear father, thou art over spry
" To-day—the dew is scarcely dry;
" —Yet pardon if thy Agnes will
" Be rude—she would not have thee ill."
" Tut, child, thy fears are ever vain,
Thine eyes deceive thee, thou wouldst fain
Have me believe that I am old,
So old—but fit to be cajoled.
There's warmth within me yet, good child,
And blood within these veins, though mild
That blood has grown since first I strove
To win—and won thy mother's love.
Ah! young one, times have wondrous grown
Since then—though forty years have flown;

The forward damsels of to-day
Had thrown their cunning arts away
On gallantry;—ah—those were men,
And child, thy sex were women then.
How well do I remember now
When first I wrung thy mother's vow,
For she was hard to win—the brave,
The rich, the noble, stooped to crave,
By all that man aspires spurred,
A smile, a favor, or a word;
—She chose each offer to decline,
I spoke again, and she was mine.—
Daughter, her eyes were like thine own,
Her voice as sweet, as soft its tone;
Thou knowest how she loved thee—no!
—She died—thou wert too young to know."
The maid in secret stooped to dry
The tear that glistened in her eye,
Then with a filial effort broke
The silence as she trembling spoke.—
"Nay, father, why recall again
A thing that gives us both such pain,
Thou hast been more, far more to me
Than best of mothers well may be,
For thou hast reared me by thy side
Without a wish ungratified,
My inmost feeling thou hast known,
My thoughts have ever been thine own,
And Heaven grant that I may ne'er conceal,
From thee what I would shudder to reveal.

VII.

But hast thou heard what noble guest
Hath honored Ruthven hall in quest

Of succor,—bloody—O so pale,
I wept—I thought my heart would fail;
—And then De Mar it was that bore
Him bleeding to our mansion door;—
—I see him now; ah! there he lies
Outstretched and faint—his clammy eyes
So staring fixed as though in Death,
And gasping and uncertain breath;
—I scarce knew what I did, and had
Not Pity at so dark and sad
A vision made me less behave
The woman than the willing slave,
I had been faint, perhaps distracted, wild;
Father, for once, I had not been thy child.

VIII.

Four gentle arms half bore, half led
Him slowly to a fitter bed,
By careful hands his wounds were dressed,
I saw him grateful sink to rest;
And I—'twas I that wrought the spell;
Say, father, have I not done well?"
—The old man with a mute caress,
And softly, stroked each truant tress,
Then turned the classic head aside,
And with paternal fondness eyed
Each fresh development of grace
Within the enthusiastic face,
To greet it with a chaste embrace.—
'Twas all he spoke—no more could he have said
With all the eloquence of heart and head.

IX.

The maiden blushed, then paused awhile,
Then added 'twixt a sigh and smile:—

"This morn I have not sought to know
How fares the patient, well or low,
But trust ere we much longer wait
De Mar shall tell us of his fate."
—"De Mar," the father spoke, "De Mar,
So gentle, so ill-fit for war,
And blood and battle—O my God—
—That picture, spare our native sod
Thy wrath—though if a desert it must be,
Then be it so—a desert of the free!

X.

Thou tremblest child, yet fear not ill,
For God though wrathful, God is still;
—And look around thee;—have we cause
To brood, or murmur at his laws?
—His nature still is fair, his reign,
His own creation, his domain
Is peace;—'tis that alone to man
Subservient—is at war with man.
Without these very walls, is hell,
And flames, and deeds too dark to tell;
There man presides, his rule is broil,
And infamy, and sin and spoil;—
—*Within*—'tis Providence surveys
Alone, the wisdom of Its ways,
The vine creeps thriving up, the rose
In gay profusion smiling grows,
It decks thy form, thy mellow hair,
To spring to fresher rapture there;
Thou child art too preserved to me!
O God what have I done to Thee
Or Thine, that I should thus be blest!
Why single me when all the rest

Are down—to stand uninjured 'mid the storm,
By it ignored—yet shielded by Thine arm?

XI.

Why child thou growest pale, thy mind
Is stranger to so unrefined,
So sad a spectacle as war;—
Come, come, revive;—this youth—De Mar,
Thou knowest him, of old methought
He was no stranger; nay he sought
Full oft our door; speak child—and he
Was not indifferent to thee?"
"Father," the maiden spoke—"thou—thou"—
Then stopped, and hid her crimson brow.
"Speak, child, the youth is fair and true
Though poor—and yet his blood is blue;—
I knew his father well,—from France,
Proud land of knighthood and romance,
Our own religion drove him o'er
The water to an exile's shore;
Then daughter speak, for I can bless
Such love as this, if I may guess
Aright by all the glows that speak
In blushes on thy tell-tale cheek."—
The maiden raised that cheek with pride,
Yet trembled as her bosom sighed.—
"Father, as thou art dear to me,
So is De Mar—but half of thee,—
Were he another, in such stress
As true—I could not love him less,
—Were he my brother as of yore
The same, I could not love him more.
—But that is all, if maiden knows
That heart—which all her self bestows,
Or rightly gleans what in her bosom stirs
The heart—her own—which least of all is hers!

XII.

Perhaps he loves me not—or loves
Me only, only, as behooves
A friend—and that I might return
If he would have it, but would turn
Aside a closer bond than this,
Nor lead one hope of his amiss,
For God forbid if he in earnest is
That I should trifle with such love as his."

XIII.

The father stopped,—then half amazed,
Half pleased upon the speaker gazed.—
"Agnes, thou art a brave, brave girl,
A heroine;—and he were churl
Indeed who would unfeeling thwart
The candid impulse of thy heart.—
Be ever thus, be open, child,
Each thought shall then be undefiled;
—For better far a truth that cuts,
Ay deeply, than a screen that shuts
To its possessor oft a shame
That he would gratefully disclaim;
The conscience well-apprised of right
Needs not be hidden to the sight.
Age hath experience;—to the old
No gem such beauty doth unfold
As Candor—'tis the child of Truth,
The virgin petal born to Youth.
—But ah! unless mine eyes deceive,
Here comes De Mar;—go child, and leave
Me here to rest my weary feet,
And hasten on thy guest to greet."

Alert, the maid obeyed, for light
The step where grace and youth unite;
Her smile is warm, and straight her look,
Her proffered hand the stranger shook.
" Lady—I need not ask how fares
Thy cheek this morning, since it shares
Its every joy,—nor even spares
The flowers the beauty that was theirs
Till now.—Thy father too is well,
I trust, but that *his* lips may tell!"
" Good sir, I thank thee for the charms
Thou lendest me, the only arms
That woman hath, and yet perchance,
There hath been dimness in thy glance,
Look, seest thou—the trees are brilliant hung
With dew-drops,—and the blooming saplings strung
With gems,—'tis Nature shames thy hasty tongue."
" Nature,—why Lady *thou* art she
To all, to her, nor least to me;
Nor hath my tongue been rash, nor now
I trust is hasty, for I vow
If Absence once had told me so,
Thine eyes and mine had told me no!"
—Fair Agnes blushed, then pallid grew,
Till shame recalled the glow anew;
The youth looked down, nor spoke they more
They stopped—her sire stood before.—

CANTO II.

FAREWELL.

I.

Who that is mortal and has known
The soul-enticing Victory,—his own,
Th' unaided triumph of his art,
The proud achievement of his heart
And manly courage, well may bear,
Dark disappointment,—nor despair!
—The churlish soul to whom denied
One higher flash, the conscious pride
Of worth—who satisfied to crawl,
Counts that—the little gained—as all,
Ne'er loses, nor desponds, nor rues
One good;—say, what hath he to lose?
—And O what boots the proud emprize
To him,—or steps that scale the skies;
To him the father of a race
Of giants who bounded boundless space,
—Columbus, monument of Spain,
Who peopled land, and peopled main,
The proud historic page,—the stand
Though Death of some devoted band,
The all-heroic fame—the grand
Traditionary lore—the land
By martyr's blood from servile chain
Set free—were vaunted but in vain.—
Deaf—dumb!—the echo in his breast
Had spoke—but this were scarce the test;
And try another cue—the deepest chord
Thus bidden answers—*Lucre there* is lord!

II.

But on! hie on! each grovelling cur,
Nor gnarl—but tamely bear the spur;
—There's not a poet—poor, yet free,
So poor—but richer is than ye.—
Theirs' not the grave unknown, unsung,
Where nestling lie the Muse's young;
For them, neglected, lost among
The crowd—shall rise a kindred tongue,
The searching sympathy of those
Who fared as ill, yet rather chose
To fare thus ill—shall ever glean
Sufficient from the tearful scene
To frame the minstrel's epitaph,
Nay more—suspend the vulgar laugh.—
—Hush—softly tread—nay pray, for there
Where weeping willow willing dies,
The only mourner—mourning e'er—
'Tis sacred ground—a poet lies.
—If thou art harsh at times, poor youth,
Thy brain distracted, and uncouth
Thy rhyme,—the mind a prey to high,
High hopes, to disappointments, ay,
To all extremities of light and shade,
To beams that smiling rise, then fade,
To persecution and to scorn,
And all the cares to woman born,
Then wonder not that oft a word
Escapes from out thy bosom stirred
To wrath—reproach that right or wrong,
Ill fits the tenor of thy song,
And though for each offending clause
Perhaps there were sufficient cause.

—Twice had the sun in splendor shone
On Ruthven hall, then tamely gone
With still a dazzle on its crest,
A-glimmering in the far, far West,
Since first our hero saw the day,
Or sprang to feeling with this lay.
—The light was mellow, and the bed
As soft as ever pillowed head,
The chamber rich, while Comfort mild
Upon its own reflection smiled.
And weak, and pale the Rebel lay,
Unconscious of each fading ray;
Sleep wove its mantle o'er his brain,
Nor healed his wounds but spared the pain.
The cheek was white, the lips compressed,
At times convulsive rose the breast,
At times some nervous twitch confessed
The body's ailing unrepressed,
The spirit seemed alone at rest;
The hands are listless—stay, they close
And firmly,—banished his repose,
The frame is shaken—ha! a groan
Escapes him—but he frets alone.—
The eyelids stare;—what sudden start;—
The lips half uttering drawn apart.
"Ah! what is this, this dagger stroke,
This blood—O why have I awoke?"—
Then closed his eyes, till flashed upon
His dream, his strength, his arm undone.
Then mingled in his baffled mind
Strife, blood, confusedly defined;
But yesterday—it seemed, a man,
To-day another world began,
With ill shaped fantasies before,
And horrid spectres, battle, gore;

Delirium hung in gloomy forms,
Or hovered tantalizing charms,
And fever weighed upon his brain,
Distraction, horror, madness, pain!
—But ah! what sudden shift of scene,
From agony to skies serene,
A fairy wafts a glamor o'er
His sight—and bids him rave no more.
The Rebel stares, it is a trance,
The haunting of some wild romance;—
"Go taunting vision, nor remain
To mock my misery in vain;—
But no, however ill, thou canst not harm
Me more;—abide—friend, angel, welcome charm,
Who'er thou art, thou art not mortal form."

III.

The maiden paused; 'twas Agnes—she
Than whom might rise no greater glee,
No angel more an angel be.
She stood—one finger on her lip,
One foot light poised upon its tip,
Inclined—her feelings all the while
At war between a sob and smile;
Silent she stood,—each word—each gush
Suppressed—yet every glance and blush
And dimple plainly heard it—"hush!"
So eloquent each insinuating grace,
You caught at once the utterance of her face.

IV.

Softly she glided to his side,
And timid sought her shame to hide

Behind a sigh, but failed;—the foe
Of sin *would* there diffuse its glow.
Then blushed again to feel such fear,
While duty whispered in her ear,
Then cast the maiden form aside,
Resumed the angel as she plied
Her touching ministry—though modest pride
And blushes oft the woman still belied.

V.

She felt his temple, then his hand,
Devoured by fever's burning brand,
Yet ne'er her smiling face confessed
The anxious feelings of her breast.
Then whispered cheering words, caressed
With nursing art his pillow,—pressed
The grateful potion to his lips.
Deep, eagerly, he craving sips
The cooling draught,—and yet his choice
By far had been the balmy voice.
His ear had lingered on that sound
Fore'er;—imprisoned, fettered, bound
His will to hers; he was a child,
His spirit broken, and his wild,
Wild soul subdued; he captive lay
To weakness not alone a prey;
Some pleading power at his heart
Clamored within him for its part;
Time flew, and hoping banished fear,
He saw—he felt her presence near,
Her breath upon his cheek, and now
A straying ringlet on his brow.—
Ah! then he almost blessed his ills,
His wound forgot—and other thrills

Instead;—that wound had cured the other then,
He felt it—struggled not, but thought—Amen!
He was no more than man, and what, and what
With charms—the presence of a form begot,—
It seemed to him in Heaven, there above,
He had been less than man,—not even that
Ignoble thing—if he had failed to love.
He watched her anxious being hover o'er
His couch, and yearned for Liberty no more.
Freedom had woke no answer in his breast,
Apart—it had been slavery and oppressed.
—Vain Liberty, that ephemeral word,
That heard by millions, millions more has spurred,
That Liberty for which the crouching slave
On servile knees must previous stoop to crave,
That Liberty, false flame for which the free
Must first be slaves ere they can freemen be,
Had lost its charms on him;—the fluttering wing
That erst again the prison-bars would spring
In fierce yet fruitless force—had learned to sing,
And Freedom had become a poor—forgotten thing.

VI.

Meanwhile De Mar had waited till
The shades of evening dark and still,
Might well afford a fitting chance
To foil the Tory vigilance;
Then sought the maiden but to tell
In parting, one, one short farewell.
Not that he did not wish to stay,
With Agnes near, each dancing day
Had seemed a myth, a dream, a spray,
A link between himself and life—but nay
His country called him forth and far away.

VII.

The maiden met him, pale and sad,
—Sincerely so—yet firm,—the glad
Expression, true, had left her cheek,
She wept not, yet was more than meek;
Downcast she looked, the smile subdued,
Her heart in melancholy mood.
She shy, yet resolute appeared,
Each tone betraying how she feared
To wound—yet knew it must be so;
She struck a mitigated blow.
She walked beside him to the gate,
He pressed an answer—he could wait
No more;—she spoke, and sealed his fate.
—And side by side they stood,—he slow
To leave,—she loth to bid him go.
The crescent moon looked on afar,
Yet dimmed the lustre of no star,
His steed stood by, he mounted not,
In her, strife, war, all seemed forgot;
The steed impatient grew, and shrill
It neighed—the lover lingered still.
"Farewell," the maiden spoke—she sighed,
He stepped before her, nor replied;—
He watched her,—tearful marked her face
So pale, and yet so fair,—each grace
In ravishing repose,—nor flashed
Her eye, each rapture all abashed;
The form, the attitude, divine,
The angel had become the shrine.
She stooped her head upon her breast,
Nor wished its trembling e'en confessed,
Her hand beside her fell,—it lay
Unmoved, a small transparent ray.

He trembled, hesitated, took
That hand within his own, till shook
His raptured frame like one electrified,
He sought to speak, but vain, his lips were tied.

VIII.

The maiden started—blushed, and sprung
Away like one by adder stung,
Then heaved her bosom till its veil
Fluttered like grass beneath the gale;
Brooding the cloud sat on her brow
An instant—gone—'tis sunshine now.
De Mar then spoke. "This is thy last,
Last answer then, and I, the past,
Each lingering hope from me must cast?"
The maiden blushed not, wept not, O
But firmly said, "'Tis even so."
He turned—nor could he say—good-bye;
What recked he now, to fret, to cry;
The tear stood in his eye—O power
Of Love, and worse, O parting hour!
He staggered—no he could not go,
—Then pleaded with the strength of woe!
"Agnes but hear me once again,
The last, last time though it be vain;
And though thou spurn me from thy feet
I love thee, love thee, I repeat;—
Love thee, the halo of thy hair,
Thy cheek, the dimple kindling there,
Thy blush, beyond thine own control,
The mute confession of thy soul,
Love thee for that—and O for more,
The tenderness thou hast in store,
The purity of every thought;
O *that* is *all* the rest is naught.

And thou—can'st thou not love in turn?
O that thy bosom too could burn
With mine!—girl, thou can'st never know
To peace what curse, what bitter foe
Is disappointed love; see now
This scar, there deep upon my brow,
Am I not man enough for thee,
Then say it girl, and I shall be
O more than man, a star, hero
And great, for thou can'st make me so;
This sword shall e'er obey thy hand,
Not mine, a slave to thy command;
This arm, thrice armed, thrice nerved shall fight
And win—and more for thee than right.
Thy lip is silent;—then 'tis said,
A month—and I shall know the dead.
I cannot hate thee girl, no! hate
Had hastened, warded not my fate,
De Mar *still* loves; if that be weak,
Then all his strength in thee must seek.
Ah! then mid battle he shall feel
—The enemy more—what may reveal
A heart, thus frantic to be free,
A love, a life so crossed by thee.
Lady, I go;—farewell! De Mar
Shall think of thee, mid camp, mid war,
His hope shall be for Death, and dead,
His soldier's vigil o'er thy head.
Remember him no more!—forgot,
—Unwept—let that comprise his lot;
Forgot! because he loves thee still;
—O shame! why, why may love not kill!
Unwept—till Absence when we part,
Here—here—shall feel—but miss the heart;
Thine shall be spared to thee—nor it,

Nor I—who could thy bosom split!
Adieu!—for we shall meet no more;
If thou shouldst hear of me, deplore,
Weep not—feel not—care not, nor start,
I shall be happy if thou art—
Not here, afar, nor anywhere below;
Enough—yet stay, nor leave—'tis I that go."

IX.

He stopped—she trembled, bowed and mute
She stood, almost irresolute;
He looked; could she not even sigh,
The drooping lash concealed her eye,
He turned—ah! had he looked again,
He might have leaped to heaven then;
Who knows—dost thou? what female heart conceals,
Or how—or when—or where—or what—it feels!

X.

And she, the last of all; weak thing,
Yet dear, her heart is like a spring,
Look down into its depths, the deep
Yet pure and crystal drops that weep
Upon the quicksands of the shore,
You dizzy grow—you see no more;
But look upon its surface, there,
The sunbeams oftenest are fair.
True, there all seems to leave a trace,
And frequent shows upon its face
The gloom, the gleam, the ray, the night,
Dark shades and vivid hopes, and bright,
And yet that heart of so congenial birth,
'Tis both the best, the simplest thing on earth.

XI.

All bowed the maiden stood, and soft
The mellow moon-light shone aloft,
Till once and bright, but once alone
The tear upon her eye-lash shone.
It lay one moment, loth to fall,
Lingered, in vain, its own recall
The deepest misery of all.
—O woman's nature, woman's tear,
How glorious, touching, when sincere,
But maiden's weeping, O the charm
Above all others, aye, to warm
To fire—soften—then disarm.
—Then flashed her eyes, sublime, intense,
Yet half the beauty in suspense;
Each beam more sweet than that before,
You wished for what you saw—no more,
Yet knew their light she might unfold
Intenser by a thousand fold;
Their spring the soul,—their source the spirit pure,
Unfailing, inexhaustible and sure.

XII.

De Mar saw not the tear, his foot
Was in the stirrup—both were mute.
He hesitated—but the steed
Impatient plunged, and he must heed
Its voice;—though life be now undone,
And hope forsworn—he must be gone.
He smiled, ah! bitterly—what thought
Thus suddenly his fancy caught
—He gazed, and longing;—there—his foes,
The British camp, wrapped in repose.

He sees a horseman waving o'er
His sword, already steeped in gore.
Some wake, some wake not for they die,
A score already bleeding lie,
Some rally, 'tis a single arm
Has borne upon them such alarm—.
That arm is raised again, and blind
It strikes—it fells—before, behind,
Until a hostile—no—a friendly blow
Descends—the warrior is laid low.
A maiden weeps—expiring is
The youth; he smiles,—that form is his.
—But ah! his sword not his alone;
O that his life were *all* his own.
His heart relents, the vision fleet
Is past—he springs into his seat.
"Good-bye"—the maiden speaks—"good-bye,"
And turns him a reproachful eye,
Extends her hand, he takes it—oh!
That pressure he could not forego;
He takes it to his lip—and ah! that kiss—the bliss,
To him of some, another world—the last of this!

XIII.

The maid has dropped her head, she weeps;
But wrings her wet hand from his lips—
"Good-bye—good-bye"—with breaking tone,
She says—she looks—she is alone.—
Tearful, she hears not, quivers not,
But faint is rooted to the spot.
—Afar, afar, is seen a cloud
Of dust, and lingering long and loud,
The clatter of a charger's bound
All madly charging o'er the ground.

—Once more, he looms, yon crest of hill
Leaps o'er—gone, gone, and all is still.
—Speed on brave youth, God speed thee on,
And bless thy heart's true love anon.
—Ah! how capricious oft
The choosing of the fair,
Why, why, are not the brave
The "ruling pasion" *there.*
—Fair Agnes moves, and turns to leave,
—How many a sob her breast does heave,
She sits and weeps, weeps long and true,
And dries each tear,—it starts anew;
And he was fair, and valiant too;
She thought, and good and free from art,
Impulsive, ever warm of heart,
So tender and so generous,
How could she, could she treat him thus?
That she might call him back!—and say
And swear, she would not grieve him—nay,
Nay that she *loved* him! loved?—that thought,
She starts—but no! it can be naught.
—No, maiden, thou hast yet to know
The thrill of that peculiar glow,
Thy heart untouched, like secret spring
Unmoved, to which the warblers sing
A distant strain, and whisper in the ear,
A melody of half-expectant fear.—

XIV.

—The world—what is it, but a hogshead still,
That Fashion rolls around and round at will,
The fools within from side to side are flung,
The greater spirits squeeze out at the bung.

—One week went by, another too,
As Time so eager to pursue

His steady course rolled on.—Could Time
Relent, and lengthen out the prime
Of life—nor hasten on each joy,
Nor lend, then spitefully destroy,
Pleasure—its plaything and its toy,
How fitter were existence made
For man—so easily dismayed.
Stupendous Time! so flitting, fast,
And now thou art—now thou art past,
    Inexorably gone,
    And coming still
    Inexorably on
    For good or ill.—
They say thou art Eternal—awful threat!
And thou hast been Eternal—stranger yet!
Eternity and Time.—O human mind!
All dark, all Mystery!—before, behind.
Weak man! so infinitely small,
A worm, a dust, a grain;
The greatest mystery of all,
That thou canst *still* be vain.
—Time flew, and with it also flew
Life's passing clouds of varied hue.
Beneath th' orizon of the tomb
Went some—some to a better doom,
Some sinister, some fair and bright,
Reflecting or refracting light,
And some a reckless course pursued,
—And torn, like fell vicissitude;
And others like the ocean spray
Danced on, till worn their web away;
Some came, some went, some fast, some slow,
As dangerously high, or low,
The various currents of the air,
Impelled them onward here and there.

—Mark that one, 'tis a maiden's time,
Youth in its innocence and prime;
'Tis scarce a cloud, a fleecy ray
All golden, feathery and gay;
Now mark the change;—what flutters there above,
A wing—first light of palpitating love,
An Angel—O that she could fly,—that face,
'Tis Grace, deep-kneeling to superior Grace.

XV.

She prayed, yes, Agnes prayed each day
And night. Do not all maidens pray?
Is He who marks the sparrow fall,
Not O—the common God of all?
Do they of all that bustling host
Who *know* Him best—*ignore* him most?
Or shall that savage wild, whom fate,
Has outlawed, and whose Creed is hate,
Who, if he hath not justice, yet
Hath still a reason for that hate,
Shall *he* teach man the love of God, nay more,
Instruct the Christian (!) man how to adore.?

XVI.

This maiden knew her neighbor not,
The World had branded her a sot.
Simple she was in truth, but—nay
What boots it, we may not gainsay.
—For ah! the *World* is wondrous wise,
Nor judges e'er with jaundiced eyes,
It hath the wisdom of the owl, but mind
The owl at *midday*—when that bird is blind.

XVII.

To Agnes it was little known,
She saw its motives in her own,

Nor knew as yet, so blithe her age,
The shadows of another page.
She judged the world as cold to pelf,
Uncalculating as herself,
And life the purling of a stream,
Too sad, because too short a dream.
And she but little knew her own
Confiding heart, for had she known
Its utter purity—that fancied world
Had fonder—nay, thrice fonder purled.
This morning Agnes rose, and fresh
As daffodil, nor long to dash
Away the scarce-awakened flash
That lay so lightly on her lash.
Till long and loving lay her braided hair,
Then light her step, and light her morning prayer,
—The promise of the Morn is ever fair.

XVIII.

Glenburnyme too had felt the light
Break in upon retreating night;
His soldier's ardor half returned,
For combat now tumultuous burned,
Until he thought the clarion crow,
Th' alarming herald of the foe.
And wandered forth his earnest gaze,
Just wakening to its pristine blaze,
Until it rested on his sword,
Its idleness and his deplored;
Then farther till it rested e'en
Upon the very battle-scene,
The clashing carnage, and the charge,
And sabre flashing upon targe,
The clamor rising on the ear,
The fear, but soul-enticing fear,

The panting pulse, that shrinks, then craves
To measure with the brave of braves,
And all the awe, and all the charms
Of battle with its hot alarms.
O war!—enticing thing—and battle
With fierce, intoxicating rattle,
The wild war-cry, defying dare,
"For Freedom on!"—soul splitting air,
But Music to the dome of heaven raised,
All—firing, dashing—enthusiastic—crazed!

XIX.

His strength had conquered death at last
And now his spirits fired fast;
That spirit had but little left,
If fell disease had but bereft
It of one spark of life; his soul
Was soft, yet brooked no strange control;
Bold, dashing, free, impetuous, eager,
Were not the word—'twas martial fever.
—And yet he needs be patient still,
And strive to tame each warlike thrill,
For though the spirit had forgot
Its cage—the frame had answered not.
—'Tis true he staggered forth betime
Laboring his rugged way to climb,
Each step an effort, and each effort pain,
And sickly then and faint his dizzy brain.

XX.

Slow, slow, his limbs began to feel
The springing of their former steel,
Till Nature gradual seemed to yield
Yet grudging, and his frame revealed

The sinews that it knew before,
The charm that marked it out of yore.
Gladly he threw the crutch aside,
And stepped unaided in the pride
Of man—his cheer caught up the step, and life
Breathed through his lungs, and nerved his arm for strife.
And more than grateful he to her whom God had chose
To be the sweet nepenthe* of his former woes.

XXI.

Ah! there were moments mid his ills,
Replete with happiness and thrills,
As oft a graceful form beside,
And fair, the sufferer's crutch supplied;
Perhaps his weakness then had been
Increased, exaggerated,—e'en
All feigned—the youthful soldier felt
Ah! then his very manhood melt
To woman's softness, and his arm
All trembling shake her fragile form.
Perhaps his ardor then had waned,
His heart been once again enchained,
His ire tamed, and in his glance
But little left of arrogance.
Perhaps again one small regret
Its pressure on his mind had set;
—That he might throw the sword away,
And bleed beside her all the day;
That he were free to linger—nay

*Nepenthe—a drug that drives away all pains.

To watch, and watch forever nigh,
The dreamy deepness of her eye,
That thrilling ever seemed to sigh.
—There was a mute, mute pleading there
That told her every sin forgiven,
To some it might have seemed a prayer,
To him—'twas more—if more be heaven.
—But ah! who are the free! go thou and see
The rich, the proud, and ask if they be free,
The ruler of a million subjects,—he
The greatest slave of all, because he knows
That Freedom is the idle dream of those
Who if they weave but fillets for the freed,
Full often forge the manacles of greed;
Go ask the master of the slave; and he,
Vain man, will tell thee—God alone is *free*.

XXII.

Glenburnyme was a soldier; Pride
Made onset on his weaker side,
While Love in powerful array
Contended o'er him for the sway.
Pride yielded to the shock, but sues
For life—can life Love well refuse—
When Duty to the rescue came,
All panoplied in conscious shame,
Renewed the struggle but in vain,
Love held its own with might and main,
Till blushing Beauty bidding all to cease,
Proclaimed the terms of honorable peace,
Nor left a chance for Victory to scoff,
Since Woman, as ever, bore the honors off.

XXIII.

One evening,—'twas the setting sun,
How favored !—shone the scene upon,
An evening such as Nature wears
When God seems smiling to its prayers.
—It is the silent voice of things
Created—when Creation brings
Its tribute to the throne above
In pledge of gratitude and love.
And bright the parting radiance beamed,
Each tinted leaf with lustre teemed,
Yet still,—each breath suspended seemed.
It was the eloquence of thought
To one ecstatic rapture wrought,
When man is little—language naught;
Evening, soft evening, and the last,
Last ray descending, ere it past
Away—kissed forth its waving hand
Unto the blushes of the land,
And flower, rose-bud, *all* were fair,
And perfume on the love-sick air,
And green the lawns, in very voice, and deed
The scene, the altar of a Nature's creed.

XXIV.

The very hour when love impels
To temper down the rising swells,
When all the tendencies that move
Are more in worship than in love,
When mutual sympathies inspire
The chastening—not consuming fire.

They sat beside each other they,
Nor spoke, but thought the time away,

She marked the beauties of the sky,
He too, but marked them in her eye;
She sighed—then checked the sudden sigh,
Then blushed—then rose—"she might not wait,
"The dew, the damp"—she stopped, "'twas late;"
She blushed, nor long was he to seek
The conscious fiction in her cheek.
Glenburnyme reddened till the blood
His very temples seemed to flood,
Then shook!—ah, woman, soldier may not brave,
Thy timid answer when he stoops to crave.

XXV.

Then Spoke—
"Fair Lady, I have much
To tell, and beg thy ear for such;
Nay! start not, go not, for I swear,
This heart, this mouth, these lips shall dare
No forward language to thy ear
That thou shouldst feel a pain to hear;
One look, one glance from thee shall cleave
This tongue forever ere it grieve."
Timid, embarrassed, fearful, pale,
Her will had been without avail,
The maiden stood before him—Grace
Spell-bound with half-averted face.
And clasped her dimpled hands, and white,
Together hung, and clinging tight;
Matchless the form whose own spontaneous soul
Allured, yet awed the gaze, and crowned the whole.

XXVI.

'Twas Bashfulness her spirit bound,
Her conscious lashes sought the ground.

—Glenburnyme sat and looked above
To note that oracle of love,
And quivered oft his frame, and broke
His voice to hoarseness as he spoke.
"Lady—to-morrow, ere the day
Has caught thy charms—I must away,
Torn, freshly bleeding from thy side,
The wreck of all my former pride.
Oft have I felt a sphere—a spell
That I had rather feel than tell
Soft creeping o'er in timid fear,
When thou—as thou art now—wert near;
That hope—that spell—that welcome sphere
Now, now, they cling, they center here,
Within my heart;—shun them, despise,
I can no longer now,—it lies
Not in my broken strength,—I feel
That mind which might alone reveal
My heart—if throbbing at thy feet
It had a tongue to speak its heat.
If that is Love—I do not know,
Yet say not that it is not so;
I love thee not for Love itself,
For that which they call Love were pelf
Beside what I have felt,—thy heart,
Thy dreams have ever been a part
Of me, and I have almost died,
When care that dream of joy supplied;
Thou canst not weep, bnt I must fain
Believe, 'tis I have caused the pain,
Thou couldst not sigh, but I have felt
'Twas I the ruthless blow had dealt,
Till Consciousness hath made my soul
Insane, when it could scarce condole."
He stopped—the maiden strove to speak,

But faltering found her strength too weak.
" Agnes, ah! let me call thee so,
One glance—nor O that glance forego;
I ask thee not to speak, but let
That tear with which thine eye is wet,
Provoke my bliss, nor one regret.
Nay, nay, I have not done, thy ear
Hath still my *gratitude* to hear.
—But yesterday, and I was worse
Than dead—a prey to ills so fierce
And fearful, that a gentler nurse
Than thou, had left me to their curse.
I knew not what I felt, or said
Or did—I scarce knew that I bled,
My soul was lost to hope—my aim
Undone, my body racked,—my frame,
This vigor once, a hopeless waste,
This badge, this arm, this sword debased.
Now, I am not myself, but more,
Thrice more than I have been before;
This arm, this heart again set free
Burn for their country and for thee.
O fire that heart, and then that arm,
Inspired by such mighty charm,
Shall follow it, and cause to ring
From out its most inspiring string
The very harpsichord of fame
In echoing tribute to its name.
—O God, thine eye is flashing, girl,
Thy lips in answering cadence curl,
Then daughter of my mother mine,
That land, that mother too is thine;
To arms!—that sacred duty not alone
Is mine, but hath an echo in thine own
Warm heart;—then see I cast me to thy knee,

Thus take thy hand—O leave it here with me
To check my throbbing heart, its pressure there
My cross—its memory my morning prayer;
Crusader, I shall go thus sanctified
To die,—returning claim thee for my bride!"

XXVII.

The maiden sighed,—when maidens sigh,
Or droop their melancholy eye,
Or when distraction strange has brought
An odd perplexity to thought,
It is the heart, a fluttering led
Beyond the wisdom of the head.
Ah! woman's heart—the e'er redeeming ray,
To them that know, the ever open way.

XXVIII.

Timid, then firm, the maiden's pride
Her every accent dignified.
"Sir stranger, this is scarce an hour
To bandy, hesitate, to cower;
Those very sounds which struck thy ear
But now—nor brought to mine a fear,
The rallying shout of comrades, far,
Yet loud amid the din of war,
Appeal as well to woman's heart,
And bid us soon,—forever part.
—Have you not marked where'er the foe
Has been—the tale of vivid woe,
Around us upon every side,
And torch and tear spread far and wide,
And ruin and despair, and poor,
Sad sights where all had smiled before.
'Twere shame, were daughter of the land,
Mid such a scene to pledge her hand.

Who knows but ere the day is spun
Our turn shall come, ourselves undone!
Go, stranger, friend, call this a dream,
A joy—whate'er thou wilt—but deem
The vision past—'tis at an end
Since I no longer may befriend."
"O say no more" the Rebel cried,
"But speak the hope those words implied,
'Tis all—I care for that alone,
Nor now could claim thee as my own;
No, not till fortune, fame, shall crown
This brow, this sword with some renown,
Nor till the lover proud shall be,
And Honor bear his name to thee.
O I could struggle with that hope,
Nor fear with Death itself to cope,
Nor struggle only, nor contend
In vain, but triumph in the end.
Romance shall every deed inspire,
And Love turn blood to living fire,
Till Feeling wedded then to thee
Shall draw its strength from Memory."
The maiden trembled as he drew
Close to his breast her hand anew,
And pressed with soft, persuasive tone
Her yielding form beside his own,
Yet shunned with maiden bashfulness
The growing warmth of his caress.
He pressed her struggling hand,—'twas all he dared
to do,
She smiled between her tears—ah! he was happy too!

XXIX.

O moment of supreme content—
The whispered word—the mute consent,

The stolen glance—the secret glow,
The yearning, the forbidding "no;"
The hand that speaks each passing thought,
The kindling blush, uncalled, unsought,
The glance that shuns the other glance,
Then meets it—then the breathless trance;
The faintness—paleness, then the thrill,
The choking—no!—for breath is still;
The loveliness, how chaste, how rare,
The broken "yes! O yes! fore'er!"
The tale untiring, and the vow
Unceasing, told again, and now
The sigh,—so close upon the kiss—
That there is limit to such bliss.
Ah! love, true love—the only life below,
So little known—so often death to know!

XXX.

But hark! what breaks upon the ear,
That sound!—foreshadowing of fear;
The tramp of many steeds, and clang
Of sabres—ill-foreboding pang;
And shouts of men, and harsh command
And steel and tramp on every hand,
The angry summons at the gate,
King George's troopers may not wait!
—The dream is broke, they rise, they start,
O cruel pleasure that is short.
"Fly, fly"—she cries—"the foe, the foe!"
He must, and yet he blessed that foe.
He blessed it for the vain embrace
Till then, he ravished from her face;
She clung upon his arm—"Adieu!
"For flight thy moments are but few."

Again the stern oath sounded deep,
And blows without—and still they weep,
Nor part—O welcome is the foe
To him—that brings such grateful woe.
"Adieu! adieu!"—he lingers on that breath;
Ah! there expiring—he had welcomed death,
Had sought the fatal blow that bore her to his arms,
Resisting, yet resistless with conflicting charms.

XXXI.

"Fly, fly! O *dear* Glenburnyme fly!"
She cried, "and spare me, or I die!"
She struggled now no more—her hair
Upheaved upon her bosom fair,
Concealed but half the throbbing there,
Her cheek—the color of despair.
One moment—long—but one alone,
He felt that breast upon his own,
Then bore the half insensate frame
Within—and called, and called its name,
Till one long—loving kiss in answer served to tell,
And truer far than words, the last, the last farewell.

XXXII.

He flies—is gone!—and what is gone—
Hope, life—all, all, but him *alone.*
And did she love him? love him! yes!
Those tears she would in vain repress,
That sunken heart—had told her more,
Than all she knew, or felt before.
Yes! she had loved him, yet she knew
But now, how powerful and true
That love;—perhaps she had been cold,
Or left one feeling yet untold.

That she might quell this parting pain;
Speak to him, hear him once again!
"Glenburnyme!" yet he might be near,
She trembled—lest it reached his ear.
She rose—and felt her dizzy brain,
Around—beside her—gazed in vain,
Then holds her heart, and sighs, and lonely is
She sees—save that—no! nothing that was his.
Naught save his burning breathing on her brow,
She feels, and yet so coldly felt but now.
—The window—that one hope is left;—she flies,
And eager peers and dries her tearful eyes.
'Tis he! she marks him climb the garden wall;
He pauses, springs—"O Heaven break that fall!"
Breathless she leans—she hears the clash of steels;
Glenburnyme fear not, for the maiden kneels!
—The din is o'er—then shout succeeds the shout,
Thank God! 'tis rage—the foe is baffled out!
Now, now, she marks him—fast across the plain,
He presses on a noble steed amain,
He turns, and waves his sword again, again,
She sees, but fails to mark its deep red stain;
She clasps her hands—then waves them oft to him,
Till distance makes the mutual vision dim.
—And they have parted!—who has parted too,
Nor knows the wrenching of that word "Adieu!"
The last in Death, the last, last word in life
Of dying kin—or soldier in the strife.
Adieu—how bitter to the mother's heart,
When she and hers perhaps forever part;
Nor Hope cheers on the parting—yet is there
To whet the taunting mockery of despair.
Accursed cup—that tastes the draught—farewell,
To lover's ear, the grave's low tolling knell.
They meet, they love perhaps, and then the end,

Remembrance but regrets—that page is penned!
The one familiar face, the *only* eye,
The glad, glad laugh or sympathetic sigh,
The sweetness, and the voice, unfading strain,
The mute accord of hopes, of dreams, of pain.
Why have they met, and if at all—O why
Apart—may not the vain remembrance die?
Why must the Memory survive alone
To weep above the ruin—all its own!
Ah! then for Fickleness—ay *falsehood* then,
For oft they cannot, must not meet again.
And who when parting wings the poisoned dart,
Who that can love—would have that *curse*—a heart.

CANTO III.

THE EVE OF BATTLE.

I.

Louisiana! yes—Louisiana! thou,
Whose lowly offspring hails thee now,
Canst thou not nurse a minstrel too,
Not one—one single bard imbue
With filial flames? What though thy breast,
By every gentler wind caressed,
Hath suckled no prophetic seer,
Nor still the rugged mountaineer,

Thy page boasts not the pilgrim poor,
The paladin or troubadour,
The olden tale or wild romance,
Or bold crusader's couching lance;
What though thy legendary lore,
Alone the simple brave of yore,
Who dared oppose his naked breast
To proud De Soto's Knightly crest;
What though the prouder ancient Muse
Thy young their pittance should refuse,
And they must burn for want of classic Pyre
Their incense at some freshly kindled fire,
Nor tune their music to the olden lyre,
O Land, mine own—canst thou not still inspire,
Or must the flame invoked but now as soon expire!

II.

No! Land of prairie and of pine,
Louisiana! fertile and divine,
The cream of Nature yet is thine!
And thou art young—the vernal spring,
And youth to thee their garlands bring;
Thy limbs are clean;—impulsive peal
Thy cries when patriotic zeal
Aroused—stirs up to thirsting ire
The slumbers of thy martial fire.
Aroused—nor laggard to awake,
When threatened Honor is at stake,
Ah! then let Tyranny forbear
To speak—and Felony beware
Of thee—for if thy fight at last
Is won—thy fame is of the past,
Unknown the day when O thy sons were dumb,
The record of their shame has yet to come.

III.

May not the foe in tremor tell
The magic of their maddened yell,
When Jackson watched thy banners wave,
Triumphant even to the grave;
And when Virginia's best brigade
Recoiled before the havoc made,
And he, her proudest son of all
Had well-nigh met his triumph's fall,
Louisiana there redeemed the day,
And wrested Victory away.
And now "Louisianians charge" and Taylor led,
And Stonewall urged Louisiana's own ahead,
Till down—hurled, routed, pell-mell, overthrown,
The foe *must* yield—yet yield to them alone!*
And further—must the battle's muse impart
The first, the maiden prowess of thy heart,
When still a suckling babe at Freedom's breast,
Like cradled Hercules already unrepressed,
She strangled, till its gasping rattle rang
The hissing snake that bore oppression's fang,

*The charge alluded to here occurred at the battle of Port Republic—and is thus described by Cooke,—whose description, however, I take the liberty to condense. The Stonewall Brigade had advanced against the enemy's left strongly posted with artillery, but their ranks being torn by a deadly fire of shell and canister, they were forced to fall back in disorder. Two Virginia regiments headed by Stonewall Jackson himself now advanced at a double-quick—but met by an enfilading fire—and attacked in their turn by a sudden charge of the enemy's infantry, were likewise driven back with great loss. The foe rushed forward, the battle seemed lost. At this moment Jackson turned to Gen. Taylor after observing that the enemy's batteries must be silenced, and said, "General can you take that battery?"

"I think I can, sir."

"It must be, or the day is lost."

Taylor rode to the head of his men and pointing to the frowning cannon above, exclaimed.—"Louisianians! can you take those guns?" With a wild cheer his brigade swept forward—plunged through the torrent of shot and shell—and crippled but victorious drove the enemy from their batteries. Three times did the brave Louisianians lose, then win the pieces, until finally, supported by reinforcements they chased the enemy far beyond the scene of their prowess.

Till Orleans to the rescue overthrew
The fated champions of a Waterloo !*

IV.

And triumph of a later day,
When rose above the crashing fray
The Southron yell;—must poet tell
Again the story known so well,
When recreant—hushed that lofty name
Still dear, yet far too great for fame,
Whom glory brought to crimson shame,
And glory still—must—will reclaim,
When haughty Tyranny arose,
But once, to writhe in felon's throes,
And when an Ogden chose his God
For stay, for love his native sod,
And led his gallant league to die
With him, or perish ere they fly !
—Immortal youth of Liberty,
Comrades, the proudest yet to me,
Be yours' the laurels of the brave,
Ye earned them—take them now, nor crave.
Ah ! they are yours', ye dead, if Freedom still
Survives another patriot heart to thrill,
And yours' again since Honor may be proud
To guard fore'er your now immortal shroud.
If not, then from your graves in anger rise,
And fearless ask—" Who dare dispute the prize !"
—Nor widow weep—nor mother—for see there,
The noblest monument that martyrs share,

*The Battle of New Orleans was fought on Jan. 8th 1815; the battle of Waterloo on June 18th, of the same year. Sir de Lacy Evans, lieut. col. of the British forces at the battle of N. O. was subsequently with Wellington at Waterloo—and afterwards Lieut. Gen., in the Crimean war. Lambert who was major general and led the British reserves, assumed chief command of the defeated army after the battle. He afterwards figured at Waterloo as division commander in the British left.

Louisiana lovely from her ruins rise
To meet their greetings from the blessed skies;
And they are dead! but what *survivor* cares,
For life—Louisiana free! that noble work is theirs'!

V.

Land of the cypress and the field,
Where teeming with perennial yield
Is Nature's bounty best revealed;
Cradle of all that's dear to me,
Thou garden growth of Freedom's tree,
Blossom of orange, genial clime
Of flowers, love and fragrant thyme,
Eden whose sons are brothers mine,
And daughters winning, O divine,
Cast not away the humblest one,
At home—in exile—still thy son.
Banished but now from off thy shore,
I yearn to feel thy breath once more,
Yet love to gaze on thee afar,
And feel how strong thy tendrils are;
And mark thee springing onward now,
The virgin beauty of thy brow,
Remember well the Gulf, the Stream,
And see the shadow of that dream,
Till sight restored to Memory engraves
A new-born Venus rising from the waves,
While venerable waters stretch their hands o'er thee
To bless the offspring of their union with the sea.

VI.

Muse, hast thou done—for weak my brain
Totters beneath the violent strain;
To other bards the minstrelsy
Of fame—or song of liberty,

To Genius that which might exalt
A nation to the heaven's vault.
—And yet forsake me not, for soon
The melody must change its tune,
And battle then awaken higher
Music from the quivering lyre;
And man meet man, and fire, fire
In all the deviltry of ire.
For this—my poor and weary lay
One smile from thee will well repay,
Nor let my vagaries 'gain roam
To visions of my cherished home.
—Carolina—thou too hast thy charms,
Thou Vulcan of the Southron arms,
And should those principles forsake
Thy countrymen which made, and make
The Southerner so true to God,
The Vestal Virgins of thy sod
Shall make alive again those flames
And quickening at her patriot names,
Renew, revive, th' electric spark on high,
Or dying—wing their spirits to the sky.

VII.

Glenburnyme rode,—for hard the race,
The foe averse to quit the chase;
Yet farther, farther dashed amain
Then tightening drew the sudden rein;
Till rising on his listening ear
Grew near and fierce the Tory cheer,
Then dashing on again, and back
He hurled defiance on his track;
Outstrips—then halts—and jeers them aye;
They follow—certain of their prey.

Beware—for he is fleet, and knows
Each antic of the ground he goes,
Each hedge, each hole, each sink and slough,
The tiger's in the jungle now.
—And speedily, speedily on through the mire,
By field and by flow—and by brush and by brier,
Slow laboring up hill—then shot down the side,
For life or for pleasure—how glorious the ride.
—The Rebel is smiling, see, see, how his mouth
Is curled with the scorn of a son of the South,
He lures on the foe to the sleep of their death,
But checks in the steed that is gasping for breath.
—Listen, attentive lend the ear,
The hooting of the owl hear,
Another? no—'tis but the echo yon;
No answer comes—the Rebel pushes on.

VIII.

And louder and louder the enemy come,
He hears and he hastens for fear is not dumb;
Fear! that puny tyranny of mind,
So ghostly—dark, yet undefined;
The fear of what? of death!—bugbear!
How many see no phantom there.
And yet he feared, saw danger nigh
But then—he did'not wish to die.
Perhaps not for himself he feared,
For her the shade of death appeared!
And though to craven still as ever loth;
For her—he wished to love and conquer both;
The inmost ardor of his heart forbore
To more than *risk* the happiness in store.
The day was passed—when he cared not for life,
Or rash, had spurned it in the reckless strife.

—And what is fear—but relish of the dear,
And happiest are they who yet may fear,
Coward is he who fears that fickle phantom Life,
Or seeks a better one—with suicidal knife.

IX.

And ploughing on they push—till hear,
The signal—Marion's men are near.
Unheard, unheeded still—but hark!
It comes again and close—and mark,
The Rebel draws his blade, until
Defiant now the bugle shrill
Resounds, and from each dark recess
The dusky figures eager press.
"O men of Carolina, hear
Your chief and rally in his rear,
'Tis I that lead as oft I led before,
And follow now or follow me no more!"
They hear—to hear him is to follow then,
And range behind him proudly once again,
Nor mute their joy—they knew, they felt assured,
To follow him were Victory secured.

X.

The hounds are on the venzon* now,
'Tis hunted down—they reck not how.
Beware—the stag is now at bay,
The hunter may become the prey.
Too late, they near—'tis shock meets shock,
And now they reel—'tis knock for knock;
And oath and ire and sweeping cut,
And stroke and stab through groin and gut.

*My authority for this spelling is Chapman, a cotemporary and friend of Ben Johnson, and the author of perhaps the best translation of Homer.

But stunned, surprised, then beaten back,
And staggered at so fierce attack,
The British scatter till in turn
Pursued—the vim of vengeance learn.
Some sue for quarter and but few escape
To tell the story of their sorry scrape.
Averse to blood—the Rebel strives to stay
Full many a hand uplifted held to slay,
Then sheathes his blade, and sounds the loud recall,
The summons is obeyed—but not by all;
For some are deaf to sound of bugle call,
Nor shall the thunder others more appal,
The grave is dug, the martial prayer said
Nor cross, nor crescent* marks the soldier dead.

XI.

Meanwhile De Mar—for he the same
So timely to the rescue came,—
Had marshalled forth the gallant band
To yield once more the proud command;
Nor slow to greet his stately chief,
His gloomy welcome warm but brief.
The Rebel chid him not, he knew
From whence the old affection grew,
Yet clasped him in such fond embrace
The one tear bathed the other face,
In mute requital of the life
Twice rescued from the fatal strife.
The generous youth recalled to feeling,
Smiled sadly at so glad a meeting,
Then seemed as gloomy as before,
The festering wound had reached the core.

*In 1775 Col. Wm. Moultrie upon the order of the council of safety, had made a large blue flag, with a "Crescent" in the dexter corner. It became the colors of the state troops during the Revolution, and "was the first American flag displayed in South Carolina."

—The Rebel turned him to his band
And praised their readiness of hand,
Then jesting spoke—the chief became the friend,
He knew and how and when he might unbend.

XII.

The jest is done, the vigil kept,
Each weary warrior softly slept,
The camp-fire shone,—for pillows are
Their dreams—for canopy, the star.
Nor better e'en the righteous rest,
The patriot's pillow is the best;
Nor nightmare haunts his humble sleep,
Nor deep remorse, where phantoms creep,
The waking—though it be the last
Fresh hope—with all but glory past.
They rested, but the Rebel sought
De Mar to ease his crowded thought;
For perfect happiness to hold
Is vain, the joy must fain be told;
The heart its own of bliss can bear,
—Nor more, the surplus it must share.
He had imparted to th' abyss
Itself—the burden of that bliss,
And found some sympathising even there,
A fragrance in the echo of despair.

XIII.

And he had whispered to the breeze,
The sky—the overhanging trees,
The secret of that joy;—for when
Deep feeling stirs the depths of men,
Each thing in Nature has a tongue
From which a teeming thought is hung,
Blood-drooping haunts, or joys, or scowls, or seems
In sympathy of spirits with their schemes.

XIV.

The Rebel waited not to hail
The wish expressed—but told his tale;
So blind the gladsome eye of glee
He fancied all as glad as he.
—How maiden care and maiden grace
As well, with angel form and face,
Nay spirit too—had weaned his eye
From scenes of torture to the sky,
Had blurred the flaming sword away
Another Eden to portray.
How day by day that solace did impart
Strength to his body—weakness to his heart,
His final cure—his love—all did unfold,
The vow, the promise, parting, all were told.

XV.

Sullen—De Mar betrayed no mark
Of woe, nor venomed hate—yet dark
And gloomily his forehead grew,
As pale—he heard his captain through.
And once—but once—his fingers sought
His blade, his soul to madness wrought;
—Slaying or slain—what recked he then—
Spurned—alien he—the last of men.
A rival! envy clawed his soul,
And loved!—O bed of burning coal!
And what meant love like hers!—that form,
That blush—to him forbidden charm;
The warm affection,—lingering clasp—the tear
"I love thee!"—whispered in another ear,
And echoed by another's kiss;—the vow
So often plighted—*he*, a nothing now;
And O that speaking eye into another's lost,
Those locks about another's bosom tossed,

And strange! he had not thought of *that* before,
Another's bride!—'twere sin to love her more!
That picture! yet one stab—and it had flown,
One fond—fond-stab—one dying, fonder groan.
Rival and loved!—then "take that death from me,
Dying!—*her* love had found its grave in thee."
And yet but now he pressed that rival's hand,
With mocking smile and word that seemed as bland.
And there, asleep, unarmed, he happy lies,
Why tarry?—strike—the hated rival dies!
De Mar has stopped, he gazes on his chief,
In scorn and hate—his heart has found relief;
O for that blood!—but no, not thus to spill,
He might be mad—but no, not felon still;
O for that life!—the life to him a curse,
This he might take—but that—in stealth—O worse
Than crime!—yet may that brooding not betray
A darker, deeper vengeance than to slay?
He smiling, scowls; that scowl with frenzy fraught,
A solace to his bitterness of thought;
Nor yet he sleeps, the Vulcan in his breast
Though now at peace, still smoulders in its rest,
At times the agony of thought so fierce,
He lies—he wakes—the dreaming had been worse.
So creeps the night;—e'en grief may pass away,
His own—nor change, nor sunlight might allay.

XVI.

—Bright rose the paragon of day,
As Camden saw the proud array;
Nor "tented field," nor lance was there,
Nor plaid, nor plume, nor bonnet fair,
Nor clan, nor claymore, nor the targe,
Or pibroch sounding to the charge.

—But sullen frown and gloomy are
The brooding thunder-gods of war;
Bristling the bayonet and the arm
So soon to beckon forth the storm;
Nor yet the gun's incessant clack,
Or mustering to the rude attack,
Or pounding peal, or scene of woe,
—The Southrons still await the foe.
Here picket paces to and fro,
Nor looks upon the morrow—no!
That conscious breast may be laid low.
And there th' unbearded youth in fear,
" Dear Mother"—see the dripping tear,—
Has penned a message home—the last,
The agony yet unsurpassed;
Then starts at the alarming drum,
The eve of battle now has come;
The eve of battle when the bravest of the brave
Look back to fond regrets, or forward to the grave;

XVII.

When veteran soldier counts the hours before,
And shuddering shuns, yet hears the cannon's roar,
When overshadowed seems each smiling thing,
Nor honor, duty much palliation bring.
Ah! Glory then how vain, the flag, renown,
That flag upon the morrow may go down;
—Or Victory? what then—perhaps for naught,
A friend, a brother gone—'tis dearly bought.
Then sees, yet shrinks his soul to picture all,
Unscathed as yet, to morrow, *he* may fall;
A wife-to day—a widow then is left,
Orphans!—what boots it—" we but fight for theft."
And Famine gnaws, and feeds upon each spot,
And Hunger pleads—the father hears it not,

And misery and shame to them that fall,
What boots it—"we have won and must have *all!*"
Ask not again what gives that blow its weight,
Why patriot shrinks—the trodden strike for Hate!

XVIII.

But through the camp what fresh alarm?
See mustering squadrons rush to arm.
"The foe! the foe!"—and lo! the cries
Increasing as the panic flies,
Confusion sways the bustling troop,
They huddle up in motley group;
Till fussing* fry in awkward plight
Redress the line from left to right,
And swaggering epaulet looks wise,
His art the better to disguise,
Storms, speaks, the medley magnifies,
Then damns the fatal enterprise.†
Ah! victory were well nigh won
Already, ere the fray begun,
Could hostile foe but now appear—and lo!
He comes—a deadly foe! but not *the* foe.

XIX.

Slight was his form, and small,
The might *within* him—if at all,
And yet there dwelt upon his brow;
The daring—though you knew not how—
Had made you quail to meet; the eye
Had taught its lightning to the sky.

**Fuss* is English—*fussing* scarcely so; the writer trusts he will be excused for this license as well as some others of the same nature—especially where it is impossible to misunderstand the sense of the expression.

†The American army under Gates was, with the exception of the Continentals, numbering considerably less than a thousand, composed of almost totally undisciplined raw militia who had never once been under fire.

Dark, piercing, deep—nay fierce that eye,
It left no channel for the lie,
So straight itself—the magnet flow
Had wrenched all, all it wished to know.
Upon his furrowed face deep care
Had ploughed its shadowy chasms there,
Like fractured earth the fissures of his skin,
An earnest of the fires that raged within;
Nor that alone—the very face, the whole
Imparted every living thing its soul;
His glance, the glance you had not caught in vain,
It stirred—'tis gone—you were yourself again,
His soul—the soul you had not dreamed before,
It never went—you were yourself no more!

XX.

Marion! 'twas he—a man whose name
To fortune yet unknown, to fame
Was dear.—His was the rising star
That lit the gory sky of war,
Unclouded e'er and next to none,
Save the great planet—Washington!
Marion! ecstatic name, where burns
One godly flame, or patriot spurns
To stoop;—at least one heart shall fire
Before thy spirit can expire,
Nor yet that record lost shall be,
Till all that's true has followed thee.
—Proudly he bore himself along,
As hero mid that armed throng;
—And yet uncouth his dress and wild,
By march, by battle's brunt defiled;
And short his blade for cut and thrust,
The British blood its fitting rust.

A silver crescent high he wore,
The only ornament he bore,
And that upon his cap,—beneath,
The motto—"Liberty or Death."
'Twas all, nor plume, nor gaudy crest,
The white cockade upon his breast.*
And such the chief whom followed blind
A hundred gallant foot behind.
Ragged they strode, half-starved, half nude,
Their mien less soldierly than rude.
Yet not one Southern bosom there
But beat with more than martial dare,
Each arm a vengeance, and each eye
A solemn oath to dare or die;
Scarred they appeared, yet loud the jest,
Free, bold and easy, unrepressed;
Danger had known, yet left untamed
By wounds, the hearts for freedom framed,
And wrongs still unavenged, and woe
Had made them thirsting for the foe;
A back to every craven act and base
They turned—to every foe, a face;
Till Tyranny had found in wrath
A Hydra ever in its path,
And sent its Hercules of strife
To strangle each succeeding life,
But lacked Iolas to complete
The glory of that mighty feat.
—For Freedom strangled here, nor dies,
But there with equal power grows,
And thus it shall forever rise
From *dust*—to draggle there its foes.

*The description given of Marion here is duly authenticated by authorities which it is unnecessary to mention. The "white cockade" was worn by himself and his followers that they might be the more readily distinguished in their night encounters with the Tories.

—And close behind this band, the hundred head
By Marion animated, Marion led,
A smaller troop of proudly prancing steeds,
Whose knightly chief with naked blade precedes,
Two score or so,—and these Glenburnyme leads.
Undaunted he,—nor battle might subdue,
Nor blood, the eagle in his eye of blue;
Hope laughed beneath his glance till Hope became,
Almost a vision in such beaming frame,
—A more than promise of a future fame.
Duty had steeled—then stolen from—the heart
The firm resolve his features to impart,
A spring in every tone, a dream, a youth,
Dream vain at times—yet none the less—a truth.
For Disappointment is to man the test
That tries the mettle in the sanguine breast;
He struggles, sinks, the idol overthrown,
The work still his—the fault is all his own.
Let him alone aspire who may dare
Death, disappointment, drooping, nor despair,
Poised on the precipice of peril—still
Is Hope to the indomitable will,
And he who leans on God, on Virtue for a stay,
Then falls, nor strives to rise, but falls a fitting prey!

XXI.

Beside Glenburnyme rode De Mar,
Becoming satellite of war;
Morn, but a blighted sunrise,—morn
With all its blossoming unborn,
Morn in the winter of its day,
It might have been—'tis passed away.
Forlorn he looked, and strange his gaze had grown,
A dozen years since yesterday had flown,
The candor in the look that beamed before

At times, was gone—it might return no more;
Affections turned to gall, and baffled dart
Rebounding back had crushed the lofty heart;
For Hope is like the arrow winged on high,
Descending—pins the archer down to die;
The higher aimed the deeper wound it brings,
The shaft lies broken in the heart it stings;
But safely sped it quivers in the dome
Of heaven—the strenuous heartstring sends it home.
—Ill boots it now to tell how Marion sought
The Gates;—his sword, his band to battle brought;
How proud Presumption scorned the proffered arm,
Nor counsel took, nor saw the coming storm.
—Yet he might strike—but in his proper sphere,
His mission far from sound to him most dear;
His band was brave, but little used to fray
In battle pitched upon so grand array,
Their wan appearance, rude and haggard look;
Not theirs the charge of cavalry to brook;
The horse—how many? forty! might remain
To guard the flanks if not one laurel gain.
—Woeful and sad, bold Marion took his leave;
To him the morrow too bore bitter eve;
His valor naught!—and must his country learn
To prize the prowess that no foe might spurn
With such impunity!—The patriot hushed
Within him that which had the soldier flushed.
The battle might be won, yet he not there
The paean shout of victory to share;
The tide might turn;—yet he might not exert
One blow—nor die, the panic to avert!
Sadly he turned upon his friends, and sought
Another field to prove that *he* had fought.*

*A short time before the battle of Camden, Marion proffered his services to Gates, who, however little appreciating the wan and mean appearance of his men,

XXII.

Not so Glenburnyme;—hope and fair
Reward, nor yet unmixed with care,
Exultant swelled his breast;—to him
The revelry of life and limb
At stake, surviving unrepressed
To wounds, to woes, seemed e'er the best;
Reckless of life, when honor called,
In heat of action unappaled,
No music sweeter to his ear
Than war's—no song of love so dear.
One blow for Liberty—one more,
Nor that the last—but one in store;
Living, he aimed the laurels of the brave,
Fallen—had wished no more conspicuous grave.

XXIII.

And yet to-night, the bivouac seemed to bear
Unusual gloom, some missing joy was there;
Subdued the Rebel's heart;—perhaps the sigh
That heaved his bosom and unbent his eye,
Relieved that bosom of some past regret,
Or told of feature he might not forget.
—All sleep; each feature by the camp-fire glow
Relieved; the Rebel paces to and fro;
Now smiling seems—then melancholy feels,
The face each deep emotion well reveals.
He thinks;—and well may he reflect.—Who knows
If e'er shall glow again the star, that glows

and mistrusting even the efficiency, or devotion of their chief—dispatched him on a mission almost nominal—" to break down the bridges in the rear of his opponent Cornwallis"—so confident was he that in the approaching battle he would drive the English from the field. The text is a slight departure from the above—a license not unusual, and which in this case scarcely requires an apology.

For him to-night;—the morrow, and the last
Perhaps to him approaches near and fast.
Alone, upon the world, ignored, unknown,
Ah! he might die—no mother weep her own;
His grave;—what boots where the orphan lay,
Unmarked, defiled, beneath the humblest clay;
His name;—there was land and day that name
The boasted blood or high emprize might claim,
But now, well might he smile, that line had brought
But sense of gentle honor!—was it naught?
And he had pledged his love; what—he, the poor
Exile whose roof the sky—whose home the moor;
And he had won a maiden's love; and she
So pure, so fair, so young, so blithe and free;
O mighty deed—O champion of the sex,
'Tis fortune—cast the sword away—what recks
That fame is flitting—'tis the fool's emprize,
Go seek thine honor in a maiden's eyes.
Such were the thoughts the Rebel's heart oppressed,
And barbed the dart of Cupid in his breast.
—And there were moments when that very flame
Had fatal seemed, or seemed but in the name,
Wealth, virtue, beauty, all in one possessed,
Himself a pauper—yet a man, at best,
And then;—who knows how maiden's heart is tossed,
'Tis won to-day;—perhaps to-morrow lost,
Perchance the Agnes highest in his breast,
Nor thought of him—nor wished his visions blest,
Had loved him once to love him not again,
Or weeping prayed—but wept another then.
She false! no! no! and vain that fond adieu,
Already false;—so loving, young, so true?
If that were so, then welcome were the fray
And curs'd the false light of a past away.
She false!—that grace, that purity of breath!

Then where were Truth? 'twere found—but found
in Death!
But ah! it may not be, the first warm gush
Of maidenhood, love's first occurring flush
Is never false, and though Affection spring anew,
Yet Memory survives—and she at least—is true.

XXIV.

The Rebel rolled him in his cloak;—then lay
In Heaven's keeping till the peeping day.
Soft his repose, and solacing his dreams,
Till battle with bipennate blessing beams.
He dreamed of arms, of love, of fame,
Of one still true, still constant, still the same,
Of victory, of honors plucked from strife,
Of perils all repaid—a bride—a wife.
Nor loomed there shadow of one struggle lost,
Or fickle fame—or passion cruel crossed;
He fought once more with ardor unrepressed,
Shame, doubt, despair—all stifled in his breast;
For when and where felt knightly heart undone,
When laurels—virtue, beauty, might be won.
—But hark! 'tis the enemy—broken the dream!
In the gray mist of morning the bayonets gleam.
The foe! 'tis the foe! O moment supreme,
The sudden alarm—the whistle, the scream!
To horse!—all is bustle; already the roar,
The flash—and the cannon-bolt's pathway of gore,
The "steady"—then "Fire"—artillery disgorge,
The rout, then the rally—"Prepare for the charge!"
—Glenburnyme is up—the bugle is wound,
Nor new, but all hail! is the magical sound,
The column is formed—the sabre is bare,
It leaps from the scabbard the slaughter to share.

CANTO IV.

CAMDEN.

I.

'Tis dawn! but what a dawn;—blood-red appears,
To curse the fierce array,
—Nor dries the diamond-dew, but drooping tears,
The father of the day.
Slow rolls the mist before the zephyr stirred,
Uncommon quiet all,
Till tuneful striking on the ear is heard
The startling clarion call.
The sun is up, the vista clear of cloud,
And up each laggard too,
The sword is buckled on,—alarming loud,
Drum, drummer, drum—"tattoo."
And courier flies from end to end of wing,
The station to assign,
And infantry with steady step and swing
Are wheeling into line.
Dashes the dread artillery from the rear,
And clattering shakes the ground;
"Prepare for action!"—quick the cannoneer
At duty's post is found.
Then sweep the cavalry around the flank,
Or marshalled as reserve,
Then takes such eminence the chief of rank
The battle to observe.
Now host confronts the host, and young Americ's stars,
Carolina's crescent dear,

Flaunts in the whiskers of an elder Mars,
Or taunts the British cheer.—
On, on! Britannia—on for spoil and pay,*
The olden battle-cry, thy motto of to-day;
Then belches forth the cannon, rolls the earth,
And hissing bullet skims in mocking mirth;
Blood streams, the heart with scene of carnage cleft,
The British veterans press the Southron left;
A thousand mouths on fire; a thousand lower,
And still their barbed tongues of venom pour,
Till billows up the smoke, no more the screen,
The British charging, cheering on are seen.
Compact the wall, and bright the burnished steel,
Not often felt—for fatal once to feel;
The British bayonet, let the Muse accord,
Till Jackson met it—war's acknowledged lord.
"Stand to your colors men,"—Virginia's cheer
Is heard, then hushed, then turned to craven fear.
The enemy sweep—sweep everything before,
The wing is crushed—the left is now no more.
Virginia flies—nor rallies—recreant all,
But few to battle, and but few to fall;
Vain, vain, brave Stevens, thou, her fitter son,
Would'st turn the tide—a hundred blades to one,
The false militia fresh to fear or fray,
To faster fly have cast the arm away;
Then rout, then panic, shout and wild stampede,
And foaming leaders led—with none to lead,
And frantic desperation—headlong flight,
And Terror blind—with all the inner sight.
On surge the mass—the friend become the foe,
Commingling, whelming, plunging as they go,

*Lest any of the author's English friends take exception to this, it must be borne in mind (by way of explanation) that he but expresses himself as would have been natural a century ago.

Till steadier hearts protesting yet undone,
Storm, raving push—then join th' infectious run;
E'en as the surge up-heaving at the rock,
Tugs, yet recoils before the counter shock,
And baffled back in foaming anger vents
Its fury on the lesser elements.
—Yet who on springing steed with menacing blade,
Trampling the fugitives would fain have stayed
The rush; now begs, implores with tearful eyes,
Then maddened hews some wretch that passing flies,
Exhorts, appeals, commands, unheard, in vain,
Himself borne backwards on the living main.
Maddened the steed—and mad the rider too,
He strikes on right—on left, exhorts anew,
Until unmanageably crazed, the brute,
Rears, plunges, turns and joins the blind pursuit.
Vainly the rider tugs upon the rain,
'Tis cut away—and hope were worse than vain,
Frenzied he clings unto the saddle;—bare
His head—presto! and white his streaming hair,
"Stop! stop!" he cries, but stopping there is none,
—The gallant Gates is gone—a Gilpin* gone!†

II.

And hear yon yell, the hireling cry,
Exulting as the foe disordered fly,

*The expression here used, may be justly liable to criticism. However that may be, it is sufficiently expressive for the purpose intended, and may recall to the reader the comical relation by Cowper of the ride taken by John Gilpin, "showing" (among other things) "how he went further than he intended."

†It is asserted of Gen. Gates, that such was the sudden humiliation he felt at thus being nolens, volens, carried from the field, at the critical period of the battle, his hair turned white as he flew.

Lest this portion of his career may have been introduced too disparagingly of the General's other qualities, it is but just to say that "his conduct was subjected to the investigation of a special court, and that after a long and tedious inquiry, he was finally acquitted, and reinstated in his command in 1782. He was elected to the New York legislature in 1800, and died in 1806. He was courteous in manner, and kind and generous in disposition."

Triumphant—hateful is that hellish yell,
To them that battle still the seeming knell.
From end to end of line the whole expanse
Of demon steel is ordered to advance,
And rushing on, and firing as they rush,
—While rolling on, the dead, the dying crush,—
The cannon come,—the British banners toss,
And menacingly waves St. George's cross.
"Foward!"—the enemy, a valiant sight,
With dash and cheer press on the Rebel right.
And shall they too for life, dishonor choose,
And craven run, nor all—save honor lose,
Ah! no! for mark the glaring front—they mock
Approaching death, and hasten to the shock;
Riddled, they rally—fall, but scorn to fear,
And drown the deafening din with answering cheer.
And mark De Kalb—as cool and resolute,
Resolved to die—he sounds the charge afoot,
Waves his bare blade, and takes the fatal lead,
Points out the foe—nor more command they need.
Frantically, as though to victory
They pause, then swoop upon the enemy,
To seek an end in Death's eternity,
Surviving life in Immortality;
Receive the galling fire, *yet* survive,
The dead their soul imparting to the live;
The bayonets clinch—'tis heart to brutal strength,
'Tis Right to Might—and Right must down at length;
Nor yet awhile, for see, the swaying front
Recedes, then breathes, then fiercer to the brunt,
And wild huzzas—Britannia is undone,
Yet stubborn reels—America has won;
Has won—but short-lived triumph, nor the best,
To die—and not to conquer—is the soldier's test.

Now volley—volley, pours upon their flank,
And fells the foremost as the hindmost rank,
Before, behind, around, on every side,
Is death—they fall, their foes are multiplied;
"Close up" they close, advance, but thinned would turn,
Recalled to duty, not to life, such safety spurn.

III.

Three hundred dead—three hundred yet to be,
Nor one to fly—who says Thermopylae!
Two hundred sabres and demoniac cheer,
A thousand hoofs come thundering on the rear,
Flashes the blade—but flashes once on high,
And high again—but 'tis another dye,
Then thrust and parry, all in seeming mirth,
Trooper and Continental roll to earth,
Then tooth and nail—*such* foes each other tear,
Dying, the combat is not ended there,
Plunges the steed—it is the end of both,
The hoof has hushed the one—the broken oath;
Living and dead are crushed beneath the horse,
This arm is raised, then staggers, 'tis a corse;
Some aim—nor strike—but trampled, overthrown,
Rejoice to die, since they die not alone;
"No quarter give"—shouts Tarleton on high,
"No quarter take"—De Kalb's defiant cry.
"No quarter take"—De Kalb, thy last command,
Thou truest son of an adopted land,
"E pluribus unum"—tis thine the epitaph,
America a nation—such thy cenotaph!

IV.

Down, down, around him fall the last, last few,
And still he strikes, surviving each anew

A dozen deadly wounds—and striking slew;
Till wasting more of life than he could spare,
He blindly strikes in weakening despair,
Then sinking—sunk, the venerable head,
Attesting foes his monument of dead.
—Who rallies now the remnant of the band
In one short, last, supreme, determined stand,
What high imperious tones would stem the tide,
And singly o'er a host triumphant ride?
—" On! on! to glory's grave"—Glenburnyme cried,
" 'Tis certain death, yet still a glorious ride."
—'Tis he all bleeding with the havoc made,
Already well avenged, nor yet allayed.
—Recoiling, charging, while their powers last,
This forlorn few hope on—though hope is past.
'Tis horse to horse—and shout on either side,
Increasing odds, the few seem multiplied;
And cleaving stroke in front and sudden sheer
To meet the onset fresh upon the rear,
Then one and still another strikes the fatal blow,
But now receives it from a fresher foe,
The rest from Death itself though life derive,
Hemmed in, outnumbered, they may scarce survive.
—Careering, thrusting, old to each device,
Glenburnyme strikes, nor strikes one foeman twice,
Now rushes onward with impetuous force,
Nor one alone a victim in his course,
And now awaits the onset, foils the thrust,
The baffled enemy but cleaves the dust,
Then seeks a nobler foe—the Tarleton is he,
'Tis skill to equal skill—and doubtful victory.

V.

Then quarte and tierce, and parried pass and fierce,
While sudden lunge averted fails to pierce,

And boiling pulse, till desperately wrought,
With weakening arm, increasing ire they fought,
Till poising high his blade in heat and hate,
The Rebel wheels it with avenging weight.
Clashing it fell with rude unsparing heed,
Nor struck the foe, but felled his fated steed.
Implacably a dozen swords had pressed
Their naked points upon the Rebel's breast,
But he, retiring slowly from the field,
His arm for safety now but seemed to wield,
And loth to sacrifice as loth to flight,
Recalled his comrades from the bootless fight.
Of forty but a score in part remain,
For all have left some life upon the plain.
Turning to strike they gradually recede,
Till few dare follow who would grieve to bleed;
The wounded lioness with crippled paw,
Though brought at last to bay hath still a claw.
—Sorrowfully the Rebel now surveyed
The gap which carnage in his ranks had made;
The merry jest not now—the missing friend
Supplies the place, though their's were fitter end;
Who lay, and deaf—heard not the galling cries
Of triumph o'er their very bodies rise:
" But where, where is De Mar?" the anxious chief
Beseeching asks—nor finds the wished relief.
—Turn they and mark above the bloody field
One arm that summoned, scorns as yet to yield;
'Tis folly—worse than folly—mark the one;
The lonely cavalier, nor yet undone,
Strike, parry, fell, and foil each new attack,
Then headlong plunge among the trailing pack.
He turns the blow aside to strike again,
And seeks his death—but seeks it e'er in vain,
Yon many wretches writhing on the ground

The death he sought from them from him have found;
High in the saddle soars the nervous frame,
The eye a furnace and despair its flame,
Insatiate life the fuel, and the blood
(Yet spared to him)—of foes—the whetting flood.
But lo!—a smoke, a shot, and rider, horse
Together roll to earth, but one a corse.
Alive, undaunted still—De Mar, though fleet
To disengage and spring upon his feet,
Disarmed, is felled—then false th' unuttered vow,
He may not die—he is a captive now.
—Meantime the Rebel watched with changing mien,
The varying phases of so strange a scene;
Now broke some exclamation from his breast
Of wonder, joy—or anger ill-suppressed,
Then burned his blood, and throbbed his bursting brain,
The rescue!—bitter thought, the task were vain.
Thrice sought his hand the handle of his sword,
Thrice dropped his arm—its helplessness deplored;
That arm, that blade such retribution erst
Of every nothingness now seemed the worst.
—And must he tamely see a friend thus fall,
Nor strive, nor struggle once, if friend at all,
Stand idly by irresolute of will
See, yet recoil, and feel—yet cower still?
No! on to death, that he may brook, but not
All honor, friendship stifled, nay forgot.
But ah! if little boots his life undone,
In sacrifice he may command but one,
Nor may he venture aught beside his own,
He may have died—could he have died alone;
Grieving he saw amid his faithful few,
The settled sentence—they had fallen too!

He paused in vacancy—nor thought again,
Nor dared to harbor each recurring pain,
He gazed—impassive beat his heart at length,
He felt its weakness, feared its very strength.

VI.

Unmoved he saw the combat fiercer grow,
Unmoved he watched foe after foe laid low,
Yet pale to deadly pallor marked the friend,
The rider, steed, in foiled destruction blend.
Unconsciously he prayed, unconsciously
The tear reproved his too indifferent e'e.
Until surprised he knew the friend to strive
In vain—a prisoner, but still alive.
—With lighter buoyancy of heart, he wheeled
His few companions from the bloody field,
And marvelled much—but not ungrateful cared,
When hundreds had been slain, himself was spared,
—Unharmed;—then turned his thoughts to fonder fair,
—Perhaps his life had hung upon a prayer,
Perhaps the blow predestined for his pride
Had been arrested—struck, but turned aside;
And strayed his thoughts from actual scenes and care
To wander in what heaven, boots it where?
—He loved to steal away in soul alone
To airy fabrics—Edens all his own,
And there to dream that he may ne'er expire,
—The only dream his Eden might inspire.
And yet to him there were no Eden there
If it were *all* his own—and none to share,
It might suffice were but the Heaven her's
And he—the chosen of her worshippers.

—On these he dwelt, and other visions too,
Yet scarcely dared to wish each vision true;
For Disappointment haunts the hope repressed,
We strive, yet striving—dare not hope the best.
He toils content, by fame nor sheen accurst,
His only dream—an unawakened thirst,
He struggles manfully—'tis for himself,
And triumphs in accumulated pelf;
For him who *humbler* treads a *nobler* path,
No sycophant or other stamen hath
But his—it is enough, for vain the rest,
If not his hopes—his motives are but blest.

VII.

They passed through Camden on their fleeing way,
And saw, but fresh—the horrors of the fray,
And skulking men—and nobler women there
With swollen eyes, and wild, dishevelled hair,
Who seemed to reck but little of the foe
Or plunder, spoil—wrapped in another woe.
Here blushing maiden—casting that aside
Which had been more than folly, less than pride,
"O speak, say, pity—is he dead or no?"
In agonizing accents sought to know;
There anxious mother all but crazed to hear
What uttered had but reached a stricken ear,
And wife—with all the utterance of dread
Depicted in the pallor—half unsaid,
Raved for some tidings of a spouse, a son,
Till death unspoken—had been worse than none;
Such knell to doubting had been fond relief,
To theirs, th' unmanning womanness of grief.
Glenburnyme now had hastened on his flight
To find relief from more than sickening sight,
But found his way impeded, till he fain

Must crush some wretch, or check th' impatient
rein,
Until he felt more cruel far alas!
The tale of woe, than o'er each heart to pass.
Proceeding now with press of gentle force,
He started onward on his former course,
When sudden darted from amid the crowd
A face—whose blush and anxious cheek avowed
Some lover too;—so neat the form and face,
Glenburnyme gazed, and gazing checked his pace.
Clinging she hung upon his bridle-rein,
And held her bosom's breathing but in vain.
'Thank God! 'twas he—Glenburnyme, was it not?'
She thought—suspense, care, doubt, her task forgot.
'And where was *he?*—spared, saved, O thanks—her
mind
Had suffered so—its drift but now could find.
From Ruthven she had followed—no! was sent,
—At least upon two purposes intent,
She bore a message—but was he the same?
If not—perhaps had heard Glenburnyme's name;
—And yet his noble form, the look of pride,
Such surely that her mistress had implied.'
The damsel then with blushing eloquence
Her bosom sought and drew a letter thence.
—A message—and from whom! the Rebel caught
The missive mid an anarchy of thought.
She write! to him? and why and wherefore then?
Perhaps, but no! he were the last of men!
Why think such angel false when he was true,
Why grew his doubting as his passion grew!
—So flits the heart; the worthier gem its own,
Must shine to all—yet shine to it alone,
And Jealousy at times would have that gem so rare,
That all must own its sparkling—none that spark-
ling share.

VIII.

But who may mend the changing mood,
Or constant fan love's fickle fire?
May not the flame to coals expire
For want of ay extraneous food?
—Then is not Jealousy the name
For *bellows* to that waning flame!
—Then warmest is the Love thus fanned by fancied slight,
And who had been inconstant, seeks th' increasing light.

IX.

Then burst the seal,—the Rebel read—"thine own"
His own! what need to add, but his alone?
And he had doubted, ah! he thought him less
For that than for his other nothingness;
And doubted *her!* had she been false, had she
In doubting him been falser then than he!
Within him that reproach had spoke again;
He strove, and striving turned him to the strain,
In weaning such, he might not strive in vain.
"Dear Friend"—ah! *dear*—that word how often said
By sated lips to all endearing dead,
Betimes laughed off in trifling, or in less,
A dear deception or a trite caress,
Indifferent penned without a waste of care,
As less of fondness had been truer there,
How valued, cherished, O how fonder still,
In bashful eyes—as yet but half a thrill,
How breathlessly intent the heart—the ear,
To catch the one—long, long, sweet, lingered—"dear."

Yes, *dear!*—the Rebel languished on that word
Until each curve some latent echo stirred,
Then read and read again until betime,
In absence—wandered to the dearer chime.
"Dear Friend, perhaps thou'lt call this message bold,
From me—to thee—it had been best untold;
If wonder leave thee room for one regret,
The maiden in the daughter, O forget;
And yet if naught in rashness here is done,
Then let the maiden, daughter, blend in one.
Nor deem me weak;—were such achievement mine
In strength as in the heart, perhaps this line
Unsaid, uncalled,—had borrowed less of thine.
—Hasten, forgive, condemn, despise—but fly,
O save—my father is condemned to die!
Ruthless they dragged him from his home; I fain
Had shared his darkest fate, but all in vain.
—Thou hadst not gone an hour, but he too
Pushed me away and kissed me *that* adieu.
Betrayed—tried, sentenced—and prepared to die,
The day of execution now is nigh;
And must he fall for harboring a spy?
I pleaded with his butchers—on my knees,
Implored—and sought their vengeance to appease,
If tears had aught availed, he had been free,
But they were vain—shall they be vain with thee?
And I had begged again, nor brooked despair,
Until my father bade me to forbear,
He would not have me kneel or crave!—and thou
To know the daughter disobeys but *now*.
O deem me not insane, and yet I feel
I may not hide what this must fain reveal,
That I am mad, as hastening hours tell,
The life that I would save is mine as well.

Then tarry not;—more might I say, but such
My trust—I feel far less had been as much.
Meanwhile shall I in prayer hope;—bereft
Of other arms, that feeble star is left;
Perhaps did I hope more, were now unsaid
My trusting heart, though nigh despairing head—
That Agnes, scarce herself, shall be not that alone,
Though still the same—if heard—the Agnes *all*
thine own."
—The Rebel read this short and hasty scrawl,
Nor once, but thrice—nor once he wished it all!
Yet naught unsaid that he had wished to know,
And still that all nor lacked some sense of woe;
"And must he fall for harboring a spy?"
A spy! what he!—and must his victim die?
—He almost cursed his lot!—and yet, to doom
And then to save that victim from the tomb,
Such glorious fruit might bear; he scarce might hate
His part, at most the accident of fate.
And then could he redeem it, rapture this,
With life itself! ah, yes—'twere still a bliss.
She his—unalterably that, form, face,
All, all, the soul—the still unspoken grace;
—What recked he now of life—his dying breath
From her's had drawn a heaven e'en in death.
—Hasten! yes, he would fly—and if alone
The faster fly, to more than passion prone;
Unmixed his love with anything of earth,
It had been gratified to prove its worth
By faith alone—nor asked a greater jubilee
Than she might share the self-same ecstasy as he.

X.

—And what is love, *true* love, if not a thing
Pure as the whispering of sparkling spring,

Distinct from sin, as heaven is from hell,
A flame?—then be it so,—that burns in both as well.

Here, cursing it consumes; there blessing bears
Prolific fruit—for sacred growth is theirs,
Here, feasting on the flesh, besots the saint,
Then smiles until its blest a paradise may paint.

—True love; thou flitting thing—short lived and rare,
Like stems too frail for all the fruit they bear;
Leave them!—the gale will break the stem at last,
Pluck them!—satiety perhaps, the best is past.

—The *blossoming* is love, the one perfume,
Cradling till death, outlasting not a bloom;
—The fruit, like everything on earth, however fair,
A transient ecstasy, the worm is ever there.

See yon fond pair, whose mutual dreams are one,
With whom the *real* is not yet begun,
Their joys are blended but as yet, *above*,
Soon they will blend on *earth*,—which of the two is Love.

The first, because the shortest and the best;
The hour which hears the sympathy confessed,
Returned, the utterance of the heart alone,
Smooth, deep, rapt, pure *is* Love, but Love to heaven flown.

Recalled to earth, it is, but not the same,
The waking from the embers to the flame,
A thousand fantasies that were, survive in name,
The painted paradise, but leaves a gilded frame.

CANTO V.

THE PRISONER.

I.

Stretched out, pale, deathlike, weary and in pain,
De Mar reposed, if he may rest, whose brain
Is mad, to dreaming as to waking loth,
Nor half of each, but shares the ills of both.
Begrimmed and dusky, frowned the gloomy face,
Where Hopelessness scarce brooked a deeper trace;
And if the outward evidence is true,
And inner soul like that exposed to view,
Then dark indeed the wasted spirit there,
That had no more to gather from despair.
And yet th' unbearded face, the eye forsooth,
But yesterday had known its own of youth,
And still; but ah! that youth but served to feel
In greater keenness life's Ixionic wheel;
The heart, the heart was worn, and in its stead
An agony, that left it all but dead;
Till ghastly Fate, exhausted of its store,
Appeared to grieve that it could stab no more.

II.

The prisoner extends th' unfettered limb,
And wakes, if sleep has been a sleep to him;
However that, th' awakening is worst,
He hungers! no 'tis thirst, a constant thirst.
—He rises, feebly gropes his groaning way,
—And drains each drop, the parchness to allay.
—A jug—cold bars—where strays a scanty ray,
Bare walls and wet—the prison where he lay.

And he is wounded, there upon his side,
His hand as though in anguish is applied,
And both, O mark the vain appealing eye,
Unmanned, yet tearless turned unto the sky,
As though there were a solace but on high,
—Then sunk—and closed in speechless agony;
Writhe, sufferer still—there is no succor nigh.
He drags him to a corner. Wounded! what
Were that, or deeper wounds, or wretched lot,
If life, wounds, woe—had left him but a jot
Of hope?—Promised—they had denied him all,
Nor strength to live—nor freedom yet to fall;
This wound so little, yet so deep, might still
Deceive,—refuse its only boon—to kill;
Nay Death itself had cheated him of life,
And fled before him, vanquished in the strife.
And he must linger on perhaps, but no!
—He frowns;—a spectre seems to come and go.
—To die, were easy still;—the recent gash,
Plowed up and torn asunder, or to dash
His brains upon the wall—the prison-bar
Might bear him,—eager thought, *that* none might mar;
—He almost smiles that death is not so far.
—And torture now of frame and heart combined
Made fiendish onset on his struggling mind;
A ghastly hope, the stranger of an age
And stronger made by novelty and rage,
Appeared as though from heaven seeming sent,
And some relief in malediction lent,
Until the spirit on the deed intent
Found less of utter madness than content;
And breathed a savage feeling of relief,
That life might yet be borne, if it were brief;
—Yet thus to die, how craven, how impure!

What recked he that, so long as it might cure,
Or hope yet yield some virtue to endure.

III.

Stern-set his eye, where Fortitude might scan
To quail—more of the maniac than the man;
A vacant gaze at times, or fierce reproof,
That frowned each sigh or sympathy aloof.
Pity had been awakened there, then fled,
Defied, unsought, the tear had been unsaid;
Softness had been arrested, but in vain,
Had sickly turned, nor paused to look again,
And Virtue where it might have saved before
Had wrung its hands its weakness to deplore;
—So abject sunk the wretch, you trembling saw to screen,
But once—nor once forgot—you wished you had not seen;

IV.

And this—was this De Mar, so young, so true,
Withal so fair—who sympathy but knew?
He, gloomy, yet so mild—he, sad, but warm,
Impulsive, soft—nor these the only charm,
Crazed, yet a man—unselfish to the end,
In woes, in disappointment still a friend?
—It may not be! and yet the curling hair,
Tossed wildly in disorder—yet so fair,
The small effeminate lip, the teeth clenched tight
And fierce in mocking hatred, yet so white;
The tenderness of face—distorted now
Till ugly scowls the deep-embittered brow;
The pale affectionate eye—now burning flame
Of frantic rage;—say can it be the same?

—The frail, yet straightening form and proudly mien,
Now sunk to spectacle so low, obscene?
Ask it of him—if answer there be not
Sufficient in the picture of his lot.

V.

Sitting upon a stone, the only seat
Which might the dungeon of its dampness cheat,
A second human shared the prison bed
Which seemed to rest more lightly on his head.
And yet the frame was bent, the whitened hair
Crept through the fingers deeply buried there,
The forehead hidden in the wrinkled hand
Perhaps to hide what it could scarce command.
A sigh is heard—a face is raised to heaven,
Or boon to crave, or sin to be forgiven;
That venerable face is scarce unknown,
Once less of grief—now misery its own;
Nor filial care to soothe declining years,
Nor cheerful voice to glad the parent ears,
Nor mute caress or sweet solicitude
To stifle tears, or foil vicissitude;
No soothing accent, doting fondness now,
Considerate hands to smooth the wrinkled brow,
No maiden's tenderness, unfailing, shy,
Or graceful form to proud the parent's eye.
No more!—the father groans, and yet may weep,
That, something yet to grief—however deep,
The surplus, that escaping may yet flow,
Nor dammed all—a solace is to woe.
—Dragged—rudely pushed along, conviction, doom;
The father well might ask a fitter tomb;
The morrow is his last;—the picked platoon,
The bandaged eye, the kneeling,—prayer cut short,
For stab in mercy cannot miss the heart,—
Since it must come, it came not once too soon.

VI.

A sound—a key within the prison lock!
—It is the gaoler, or the priestly frock,
Has gruffly come their coarser fare to toss,
—Or comes in awe with crucifix and cross.
He, with the ready taunt, or humor rough,
To grief a snarl, to tears a rude rebuff;
—Or he whose solemn office is to save,
And yet Appals—it is the grave—the grave.
—Wide flung the door! a cry—another, wild,
Four arms entwined—the father and the child!
—It was a joy, a meeting that of joy,
And sobbing, but in gladness—sad decoy!
And side by side, white locks commingling there,
And areola of the maiden's hair,
And chaste embrace, the joining of the part
To fit the void within a father's heart;
The sunlight laughing to the frozen rill,
The Spring surprising Winter mid its chill,
The past, the future for a time—a power
Sunk in the presence of a single hour;
Beauty reviving Age to dream of Youth,
Until it fancied Age but half a truth,
While Filial Love less shy, since less of earth,
Sought no return to give it fresher birth.
—But how is this? can they—have they forgot;
Not so—their joy is short—what joy is not!
—The mutual clasp is given, past and fled,
And each endearment rather meant than said,
Their souls were centered in the meeting—soon
They part—had they not met, perhaps the better boon.

VII.

The parent frame, enfeebled on its feet,
Had weary sought the prison's stony seat,
The maiden's hands were clasped within his own,
She knelt beside him on the cruel stone;
His earnest face looked heavenward in prayer,
She anxious marked the deep emotion there.
—Thrown back the hood, until the head was bare,
Its small and classic shape, a thing so fair,
Beauty had paused, and been remodeled there;
Long, heavy, silken lay each braided tress
To woo each revelation of the dress,
So passing pure each grace, their very charm
Brought Symmetry to blush its viler form.
Anxious the eye, its own bereavement naught,
Another's grief in alleviation sought,
Till you had gleaned a more than spoken thought;
And yet you scarce had deemed it sad, unless
There be a grief that blasting, still may bless,
So set in melancholy, still so sweet,
You scarce knew which, to love—or weep with it;
As gazing still the eye a moment glowed
Then trembled—filled—a tear their cruel load.

VIII.

Asunder now!—the parting hour has come;
Away! what recks the stony organ, dumb
To pity's wail, that others have a heart,
Unless it be to jar the jagged dart.
The gaoler waits, the maiden must be gone,
And quick,—the prisoner be left alone.
" An hour—less, a moment let me stay,
Thou art a father, drag me not away!"

—Nay on her knees—the maiden crawled to him,
And prayed, and wept, until his eye grew dim,
And yet though pleased the pleading form to scan,
Had dragged her forth! and call ye *that* a man!
Until the maiden snatching from each limb,
In bleeding haste each jewel—threw it him!
—Mankind! how deaf thy heart when Pity knocks;
Who there! 'tis Pelf, ah! then how orthodox!

IX.

The purchased hour is past, and they must sever,
What living thing or dead is *one* forever!
Experience, youth, and all—like changing weather,
This thing to-day—to-morrow—'tis another;
We are not once ourselves, nor one thing altogether.
—There was a moment when the maiden's strength,
So strangely tried, had well-nigh broke at length,
When Age bore all the burden of that form,
And sought, but vain, to shield it from the storm,
When she, nor sought to stem, but half suppressed
Her wild, wild weeping on the parent breast,
Until that very weeping was denied,
Lest she might give more pain than she could hide,
Nor more bewail, nor deem his death a wrong,
For him, for all she loved she must be strong;
Then gave to Weakness all her bosom's throb,
To Sorrow all she might not stay, a sob.
—And still at times she gulped the gushing down,
And almost hoped—or doubting, seemed to frown,
It was a faint, faint hope, yet still a ray,
It could not be—yet might, she yet could pray;
Uncertainty—a twinkle to the heart,
Too dear to crush—too doubtful to impart.
Ah! well she knew that he would willing fly,
And strike to save them both, or baffled—die,

Die too!—beyond, she could not, would not gaze,
The worst had left but little life to craze.
—Not so the father, his a felon's doom,
His aged locks denied a fitting tomb;
That heritage of guilt to leave—to whom?
To her!—the father, he that daughter's shame!
O Agony!—'twere here thy fitter name!
—Guilt! no—disgrace to fall for country! no!
—Yet shot, defiled, and who might farther go?
And were it all—perhaps not half so keen
To die a far ignobler death had been;
But as the father smoothed the maiden's hair,
Tossed on his breast—their only refuge there,
Turned the soft eye to his,—the face
Where every feature bore a new born grace,
He wept—that Angel so like those above
Had still enough of Woman left to love.
Ah! who would father now that supple mind,
Untaught in all the sham of humankind,
Who mark the true and point the danger out
To one—whose only ignorance—to doubt!
Her very truth a snare, her grace a lure
To rouse the malice in the breast impure,
Beset by foes, unchampioned by an arm,
However frail, to shield that head from harm;
And must that breast already torn by woe,
Trust, be deceived, and sickening sink so low,
Or worse, dragged from a blighted home away,
Tracked, ruthless robbed—become a villain's prey!
The father groaned—until the picture flew
To that within his arm—and seemed as true,
Until in madness he had plunged with zest
The Roman dagger in that virgin breast.

X.

Meanwhile De Mar, and scowling at the scene,
Lay crouching in a corner—dark, unclean;
So fierce at times, as beast prepared to spring,
Then sullen looked—a mean, repulsive thing.
Sunken the eye with weariness and pain,
Yet wild, it wore the chaos of the brain,
And half apart, the frothy lips displayed
The gnashing teeth which more than all conveyed;
And soiled the dress, and ragged here and there,
Till wrested from him, left the bosom bare—
Beside the rest the only thing yet fair.
Again—at times, he seemed to soften down,
Or vacant stared—or lost the fickle frown,
Then whispered in some ear a musing mild,
Or mutterings to himself, profane and wild;
And then perplexity—reflection—vain,
Now savage bit his flesh to rave again.
—By him but little marked that tears were shed
Beneath his eyes—*his* sympathy was fled,
But lightly recked that Sorrow crushed a heart,
Or laughed to see two kindred natures part;
Unmarked the maiden's agony of soul,
The bier—the morrow brooding o'er the whole,
The one despair, bereavement more resigned,
Scarce struck his eye, but foiled the vacant mind.
He saw, yet felt not, felt, but knew not what,
The maiden—father, love, wounds, past, forgot,
Nor seemed to care that he was yet or dead,
An utter absence—madness, void, instead.
—What now, he starts—can wandering reason flow
From, to the brain, as shadows come and go?
His color changes, strange his passion now,
A dread—a sweat cold creeps along his brow.

Fly!—he would that, and cowers to the wall,
And from their sockets glare the wild eye-ball;
Baffled, he turns, a fiend in his look,
Then sinks, till all but fear the frame forsook.

XI.

" Why fear, and fear but me?"—it is a voice
That once had made his very blood rejoice.
The maiden—it was Agnes knelt beside
The wretch—each charm in contrast beautified;
She took his hand, and he resisted not,
Subdued the will, but now to frenzy wrought;
She spoke, and lo! the savage gaze and wild,
Unbent—'tis gone—the madman is the child.
Silent he gazed into the tender face
As though some dim remembrance there to trace;
And seemed to muse, then shook the doubting brain;
She called his name, her own, but all in vain;
Perhaps she dropped a tear upon his lot,
His mute abstraction told he knew her not.
—And yet his violence seemed to weakness grown,
His muttering soft—and musical its tone,
And if he raved, he raved no more the brute,
His rhapsodies the wailing of a broken lute.

XII.

The vehemence was past—the tension broke,
And Nature bowed its creature to the yoke,
His breath came fast, his trembling frame bespoke,
The body as the mind had felt the stroke;
The eyelid droops and languor comes at length,
To strength succeeds the dotage of that strength.
—The maiden bent his temple, as she saw
His growing faintness—to the prison straw,

Pitying smoothed his pillow, stroked his brow
With one soft hand, a guardian angel now.
He sleeps in peace, yet ere he sinks to sleep,
That hand by him is rested on his lip,
The eye, half-opened—seeks the bending form,
And loving rests on each awakening charm;
He smiles—perhaps returning reason's ray,
'Tis more than gratitude or love might say,
The maiden's downy touch upon his lash is pressed,
As whispering her name—he grateful sinks to rest.

XIII.

Stir not, he sleeps!—and how that sleep is blest—
For Agnes, timid, draws from out her breast,
A jewelled cross, and hesitates—then round
His youthful neck—a golden chain is wound.
She starts—repents; yet they can meet no more,
And then his mind that token may restore,
In life arouse to sense his wakening breath,
Or dying yield some holier thought in death.
Nor thus alone his sleep is blest—it seems
As though he smiles, as though rejoicing dreams,
Nor long, nor quiet sleeps, for mark—he speaks,
The color glows, then fades upon his cheeks,
Emotion swells his breast, and then a light
Breathes through his features to the feeling sight.
—But ere he wakes—perhaps to other scenes,
And ere the active fiction intervenes—
The judgment—vision, end, or dream uncouth,
That whether dreamed or acted, blessed the virtuous youth.

CANTO VI.

THE DREAM.

I.

The prison darker grew—the apparition gone,
The angel flown—night came, and still De Mar
slept on.

It is the early dawn, a loitering morn,
When long as bride her person to adorn
Is Nature; slowly creep the jealous beams
Till Morn like bride, the vapors veiling, seems;
But gloomy is the dungeon, still, bizarre,
The day, a ghostly peeping at the prison-bar.

A penitent is on his knees,—and white
His locks beneath the ghastly taper light,
He beats his breast, and bows his snowy head;
In agony the last confession said;
The priest is moved, but hark! that solemn tread,
To claim of woe its own, of life, its promised dead.

O spare the aged form, the tearful eye!
Why spare!—the victim is prepared to die.
Go seek some fouler fate, if ye would tame
The spirit now, which even then might shame
The added curse.—They lead him forth—the pride
Of Innocence upon his brow, his butchers on each
side.

They reach the court, and face him to the sun
That rises—last that he shall look upon—

Is the cheek blenched—the courage nigh undone,
The gaze in pain averted from that sun!
Why not?—he was no criminal to die,
And why like stoic to the feeling lie!
Affect whate'er hypocrisy you will,
And be the vilest wretch you may be, still
The tyrant Nature sways some longing yet,
And Agony e'er knows of some regret,
Till oft the weakness lies but in the nerve,
And Vanity becomes the idle boast you serve.

The breast is bared to point the murderous aim,
Bandaged the eye—to make more sure that aim,
The victim begs a moment—granted,—kneels,
He prays—no tear the hidden eye reveals.
He rises—waves his hand, and stands—'tis all,
And waits to stem the life-time of the fatal ball.

"Steady!"—they aim, yet trembling aim, until
The very breath in sick suspense is still.
That hour—the mere, mere measure of a breath,
How short to live—how lengthening in Death.
—A sign—the crash of arms—the quivering lips,
As from the twisting frame the oozing life-blood drips.

Nor yet a corpse, for see, the bandage torn
Distractedly, upon the eyes is worn
Not now—and roll those eyes in shocking pain;
The crisping limbs are stretched to crisp again;
—Writhing, he turns him on his back, the face
In speechless woe—to seek the stab of grace.
Last wronging that—if such that blow can be,
Which cuts asunder Life and Agony;
And yet the murderer shuns no villain's test,
But points the last cold muzzle to the longing breast.

II.

Nor yet he dies—for lo! what shout is heard,
So long—so fierce, an echo might have stirred
Within the dead—and rioting of steel,
And shock of arms, a Vengeance for a peal.
And nearer, louder—'tis the rush of horses' feet,
The rescue! but too late, the drama is complete.

Turn now ye henchmen to the equal foe,
Nor strive, 'twere vain, to turn the vengeful blow;
For see, they scale the wall, burst forth the hinge,
Resistance naught—nor yet avails to cringe.
"Quarter!"—unasked, it had been given once, but now
The lingering was spared, 'twas all they might allow.

Too well they fought, too well the sabre pressed,
Sought—found a scabbard in some hated breast.
—Why should *they* spare who had no sparing sought
Themselves, and now for vengeance only fought,
The guilty spare—when Innocence in vain had craved,
The boon that had another's proven—to be saved.

III.

And yet the Rebel chief, though sick at heart,
To spare had found a less ignoble part;
—He deemed his errand vain, each foe a curse,
And yet for *this*—that foe had fared no worse;
Too late, himself undone, the pleading wail
Of woe, once heard, had told another tale;
Revenge had been a joy, but satisfied,
He knew, had brought no solace to his side,
But as he stood—his blade as yet unsheathed—

Beside the doomed—forgot that others breathed.
—Marked he in common agony the last
Upheaving groans—the life-blood ebbing fast,
The twitching limb, the gasp! O thus to die!
But gladder sight, the slowly-setting eye.
—Doomed, dying—and an hour since had still
Been time—he turned, there breathed no arm to kill,
Till he had longed for death, then looked to long
anew,
And rather than survive, had been a butcher too.

IV.

Meet her—for what? to stand in shame aloof,
To brook the cutting stare, or keen reproof;
Her tears—such tears; her form, grief-stricken form,
And plead—what plead? a lie, or laggard's arm?
No! no!—in scorning of himself he turned away,
However cursed then, he could not, would not stay.

Yet leave, and see her not, perhaps no more,
Stifle within—so welcome there before—
Each babbling hope—forget?—what then, the past
Could never be; the future could not last.
Hopes, fatal hopes, and dreams become a lie,
Love, trust, all, all, resolved into a sigh;
Barren his strength, a conscious might before,
But now, without avail, a might no more;
Each cradled fondness foiled, each trusting bliss,
How often planned—each hour!—destroyed in this;
—That he might weep—but ah! his mind to dotage
grown,
But sought the one relief—to be, to be alone.

V.

Yet might he speak, avow his own despair,
Be spurned, yet guilty seek his sentence there,
Plead for a tear in pity or in pain,
Be still himself—though not to her again;
—But scorned, and justly scorned—and pitied oh!
Herself had shunned to see him sink so low;
However down—he asked such sympathy of none,
For Sympathy had damned the spirit thus undone.

Meanwhile, the work is o'er, and softening now
With less of relish than they might avow,
Each rebel sought his chieftain's form alone,
Nor marked as yet the bleeding of his own;
Till Peace succeeded to the angry strife,
If that be peace, which left no foe a life.
Gloomy themselves, they scarcely recognized their chief,
Yet marvelled much at his dejectedness of grief.

Vainly they strove to gather from his speech
His sorrow, but the pain seemed deaf to each,
He moved not—heard not, and to all seemed dumb,
Their comrade erst, the stranger had become;
Till seeking in themselves, the rising thought had told
His grieving such, no mere imparting might unfold.

VI.

He starts—they listen too, for hark! a cry,
As woman utters when the worst is nigh,
Appals the ear. That voice, so wildly sad,
That form, such grace, so pure, in mourning clad,
That step, a tottering step, and yet so free,
Revealing all—until you dared not see,

That face, appealing face, that you might hail
In joy, in woe—so deathly grown and pale,
That cheek from which the fluttering wing of Woe,
Doubt, care, despair, had ravished all the glow,
That tear, which pitying you had died to dry,
Or lived to worship till you sought not why,
All, all were woman's, Beauty's, her's—and where-
fore not?
—Hast ever dreamed ideal grieving—then forgot?

Distractedly the maiden clasped her brow,
Till woman's will had left her nothing now,
And long it was ere Consciousness supplied
The strength to cast her by the sufferer's side.
—There might she mark between each keener pang
The eye-lids quivering roll, then sunken, hang,
The wound, the death-wound of the heart—the breast,
Now scarcely heaving, then convulsed, oppressed,
The bitter spasm, and the clutching grip,
The froth all-gory gathering on the lip,
The groan—as Torture jealous of its prey,
Struggled with Death to lengthen forth its sway;
—These she might mark, but half she failed to find,
Distraction pitying foiled the fluttering mind;
She felt her own keen sorrow, but ignored
The *all* of Agony she thus deplored.

Meanwhile, Glenburnyme gazed but once around,
Until his glance averted sought the ground.
His musing too a void; such picture, fraught
With gloom to him, had scarcely left a thought;
Save that his eyes, unmeaning, yet subdued,
Within himself, apart, the scene renewed,
Till softening at the sorrowing of a form so dear,
They moistening seemed to fill—nor his the only
tear.

VII.

None spoke, but silent, grouped themselves aside,
While many a breast its fullness testified,
And many an eye, unused to tears as yet,
Marveled how little it was had made it wet.
—They need not speak who gulp the conscious swells,
Whose very weakness, chidden, yet rebels,
They need scarce weep whose recklessness of kind
In awful contrast tells the sunken mind;
Nor deem them cold who have most cause to weep,
Yet in themselves the feeding ulcer keep,
Nor once indifferent they, whose all-considerate heart,
Had rather whole each sorrow than one pang impart;
And while the feeling spirit would have all rejoice,
The selfish sorrow often has the loudest voice.

VIII.

Theirs' not the woe to seek a false relief,
In sobbing sighs to simulate a grief,
But dumb dejection and abstracted air,
That deep disgust so kindred to despair;
Unused to woman's softness, there they knew,
Yet wondering found *they* had a bosom too,
Remembered how—the new emotion such—
There was a time when they had wept as much.

And Agnes, struggling with her every throb,
Had toned each gushing down into a sob,
Unclasped her hands, and smoothed the sufferer's brow,
And conscious seemed of all around her now.
"Father"—that tone "'tis I that speak to thee"—
Then drew the dying temples to her knee,

Searched the cold eyes, turned pale—and searched again,
Bent nearer—started—gazed, yet scarce in pain,
Pressed her clenched fingers to her panting brain,
Appealing glanced around her, but in vain,
Upon the victim fixed her wondering eyes,
That look the seeming mockery of surprise.

IX.

Meanwhile the wretch, expiring in her arms,
Seemed as awakening to the maiden's charms,
Sinking, returned the wondrous look, and weak,
Moved the cold lips—and sought, and sought to speak.
—Starting, as one but lately stupified,
Glenburnyme, trembling reached his other side,
Knelt meekly down the burden too to share,
Rejoiced to glean within the maiden's air,
There still might be some grateful feeling there.
Softly they raise him, softly bear the freight
Between them, till it scarcely seems a weight,
Gently they bend them to his stuttering breath
To snatch the latest utterance from Death;
Ah! bend them lowly till the maiden's cheek
So nearly grazed the lips that sought to speak,
Each ringlet rare in wild confusion now
So loving lingered on the victim's brow,
That as he gazed, the Rebel had for this
Exchanged his length of years—and thought it bliss.

X.

But Agnes, gentle Agnes, as her breast
In swelling waves the changing thought confessed,
And as the eye seemed choking up again,
In tears that told the heartlessness of Pain,

Turned—searching gazed—then drew those eyes
away,
Closed them—to doubt, or strange deceit a prey.
—Then reckless clasps each venerable tress,
The fond, gray hairs she did but now caress,
Draws back the shamming locks, and from the face
Plucks forth the beard from its unwonted place,
Then looks but once till faint her senses are,
And sees but this—the dying is De Mar!

XI.

Fallen she had—but ah! Glenburnyme bore
Upon his own the heart that once before,
But once alone—had quelled its beating there
In all a woman's wildness of despair.
—And did he quail to meet that tearful eye,
Ah! tearful—till his lip had kissed it dry,
And shudder at the glance that raised above
Sought his in all the confidence of love,
Thrill at the clinging pressure till he knew
It must be *hers*—yet scarce believed it true,
And sink to faintness as each look implied,
His own caress had scarcely been denied,
Then wonder if the arms enclasping his
In all the trustiness that woman's is
Were not a myth—till clasping them anew,
With each new joy his hesitancy grew?
—Say, ye who love, yet dare not hope to be,
Can less attend th' unlooked for sympathy,
Than silent ecstasy, or inward bliss,
Which blending life, and future life, in one rapt kiss,
Avows it true, yet doubts that it be part of this.

XII.

And now, De Mar, supported on each side,
Found in the scene which he in silence eyed,
Regrets perhaps yet more that vivified.
—And did he fret to know his yearning slain
Beyond the ember, and each virtue vain,
Covet in smothered hatred all the joy
He scarce could envy then, and less destroy,
Nay curse his love, the charms that gave it birth,
Had wrapped his wishing till he knew not earth,
The grace, and that she did but now impart,
Unbosomed then—but to another heart,
Inevitably lost to him—the charms
So yielding trusted in another's arms?
Curse them? he might, and yet the tranquil air
That lit the face, the look akin to prayer,
So fixed on both until the man seemed past,
Told he was more—the lover to the last.
—Undone, slow sinking in their mutual clasp,
The lips but murmuring between each gasp,
He soon grew still—yet ere the agony,
The maiden's hand, retained in ecstasy,
One moment seemed to fondle in his weakening clasp,
And then beseeching placed it in the Rebel's grasp;

XIII.

Turned his soft-glazing eyes to heaven, while they
A radiance still, seemed of themselves to pray,
Gazed on the youthful pair, and then on high,
Each parting look dividing from the sky,
Wished scarce a fonder bliss, and seemed to feel
Benign perceptions o'er his senses steal,
Shook—fixed the upward look in prayer,
Then smiling stood—to find the spirit there.

What more?—what need to say how filial glee
Rejoicing flew to set a father free,
How heart to rising heart, the gladsome flow
Of tears repaid them for each former woe;
How maiden sympathy bore up to fresh dismay,
When clinging to the lover, he must fain away;
How, as the lapse of seasons ripened all her charms,
And eminent Ambition crowned the Rebel's arms,
Glenburnyme, grown to manhood, nor to fame unknown,
Found *all* the AGNES in the Angel he had known.

XIV.

And now, thou Muse, god-mother of my lay,
Farewell—it must be—till another day;
Ah! hadst thou found me less than what I am,
The world had found me more, and less to damn;
That viler aims less bootless though they prove,
May yet redeem a fruitless work of love.
Hope that has cheered me on through toil and trouble,
Flickering in joy, in doubt, intenser, double,
Perhaps thy day is past, or like a dream
Hath never been, or been a fatal beam?
Accursed then!—yet stay, however now
The snare may seem, or fickle thy false vow,
However vain, what would not vainer be,
Love, wealth, life, all, would I exchange for thee?

De Mar—Glenburnyme, names that may provoke
The seething scoffing, or the cutting stroke,
Fiction—a naked falsehood to the eye,
That Faith would fain believe, yet deems a lie,
Can this be all—or must the futile heart,
Mid sterner truths, with all its trusting part!

Agnes—false semblance of a thing divine,
That haunts me—till I deem the myth is mine,
Being so fondly held, until it seem
Thou art not vain, 'tis I that am the dream,
Our life is past—for in the future, naught
Alike to thee, may fill the void of thought.
Go thou, and all the rest, and let me look
Within myself—if this I still may brook,
Such keen rebuke may hold with less of pain,
There may be myths more faithful far than vain,
In contrast warn the visionary mind,
To doubt much else beside is to be wholly blind.

Enough!—my tale is told—why idly brood?
Muse, I regret thy chaste companionhood!
The echo dies away—and in its stead,
I care not what—since Fancy must be dead.
—It was a whimsey, scarce a Poet's dream,
No doubt a vain caprice or fickle beam,
To me a fondness, but to all beside
The silly something of a faith belied.
A joy to me alone—to other kind,
The morbid symptoms of a rabid mind.
—If one there be shall deem the picture true,
Or haply mete me more than may be due,
Through him I crave the rest shall fain remit
Each erring mine, and reap but what is fit.
Could I revise the task, might I redeem
With meeter warmth the malice of my theme,
But I am ashes grown—I care not what
The *sentence* be—so that I be forgot.
—I crave no mere reward if I can claim
The credit only of a noble aim,
Foiled—there were none the wronging to resent,
The worst will leave me little to repent.

—Not mine the praise that greets inflated sham,
Or proud pretense to more than what I am,
For this is *all*—and I shall bide the blow
That needs but common strength to lay me low.
If haply be accorded one desert,
Some latent virtue, vain, yet not inert,
The end is reached;—if not, I shall be fain
Deplore the blind imposture of my strain;
Or if the mere caprice of partial eyes,
My simple lay, thus bloated into size,
Shall live a lengthened day because unknown,
Or prosper—but in sympathy alone;
If Folly eke one comfort from the whole,
Or one conception soothe the sordid soul,
If by acclaiming crazed Conceit believes
In this—it gives far more than it receives,
Then let me rather crumble than should once applaud
My trite, yet honest toil—the bluster—bray of Fraud.

But I am done—the trance must fain away,
Though I had lingered far beyond my lay;
And sound whatever sentence—come what will,
I can be nothing *less* than dreamer still.
—What though to other brows the fiat "Fame,"
Who grasping look not often to the shame,
Not mine to fix the standard test of earth
Far less—to stigmatize another's worth,
For if the vain Repute is most conferred
Where Cant but marks him from the common herd,
The envied boon commands no higher price
To precedence, than turpitude and vice,
Then ay!—to fall—if Honor may oppress—
Were nobler than that vulgar thing—Success.

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